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CAPTAIN OF CAPTAINS:

OR,

“THE BROOM OF THE SEAS.

A STORY OF THE MOORISH CORSAIRS.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM,
AUTHOR OF DIME NOVEL No. 364. THE MASKED SPY.

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CAPTAIN OF CAPTAINS.

CHAPTER I.

THE ALGERINE CORSAIR.

NEARLY a century agone, when our Republic was in its infancy as a nation of the world, its starry flag was seldom seen wafted upon the breezes of a foreign shore, or floating upon comparatively unknown seas; and yet, now and then, some bold mariner would set his white sails and point the sharp prow of his gallant vessel away from his native land, and with the stars and bars at his peak, would skim

"O'er the glad waters,"

afar from the shores of free America.

Thus it was, just prior to the commencement of the nineteenth century, that the noble bark Adventurer sailed from Boston, one bright morn in early spring, and shaped her course for the far-away coast of Spain, whither she was bound upon a mercantile voyage.

Rupert Meredith, the commander and owner of the Adventurer, was an American by birth, and during the war of "76," had won honorable distinction as an officer of the United States navy.

At the close of the struggle which gave us our new-born independence, Captain Meredith had married an English heiress, and settled down to a life of ease and luxury; but, as years rolled on, he tired of his idleness and longed to once more tread the quarter-deck of a gallant vessel as its lord and master.

Unheeding, therefore, the entreaties of his fond wife, Rupert Meredith had built and equipped the Adventurer, and loading her with merchandise for foreign markets, once more flaunted his flag over the broad bosom of the Atlantic.

But not alone was the gallant captain, for he was accom-

panied upon his voyage by his devoted wife and their ~~two~~ children, twin brothers of ten years of age, and handsome, manly boys who greatly rejoiced in the prospect of going to sea.

The Adventurer was a large bark, built for both speed and comfort, and carried an armament of five guns, and a full complement of men, for in those days, reader, danger lurked everywhere upon the high seas, especially to vessels carrying the colors of our infant nation !

The Adventurer also carried a number of passengers, whose presence served greatly to relieve the monotony of the voyage, and many an hour sped pleasantly away, passed in her spacious cabin and upon her broad decks.

Thus the weeks went by, and at length, one pleasant, though sultry afternoon, when near the Spanish coast, the gallant bark was becalmed, and lay idly rocking in the cradle of the deep, her huge sails hanging limp and useless, for not a breath of air was there to fill them, or ripple the smooth surface of the waters.

Upon the decks lounged passengers and crew, one and all impressed by the calm which overspread the face of the ocean.

Suddenly the clear voice of the look-out in the main-top startled all into animated action by the stirring cry of :

"Sail ho!"

The crew sprung to their feet, the officers aroused themselves from their slumbers, and every passenger awaited in eagerness the response of the captain, who was closely observing the horizon.

"Where-away?" suddenly called out Captain Meredith, after his gaze around the expanse of ocean had failed to detect the glimmer of a sail far or near.

"Dead astern, sir; just under the shadow of yonder cloud," answered the seaman.

"Ay, ay! I see her now, and she is bringing a stiff breeze with her. Mr. Duncan, pipe all hands to their posts, for if I mistake not we have two enemies to dread, a storm, *and a pirate.*"

The latter part of the captain's words were added in a low tone to his mate, who at once obeyed the orders given him, and returned again to the side of his commander.

"Have you made any new discovery, sir?" he asked.

"I am the more convinced that yonder stranger is an Algerine, judging from his peculiar rig, and hence an enemy; but if the wind reaches us before he is in range, we can easily run away from him."

"You will not show him fight, then, Captain Meredith?"

"No, Mr. Duncan; this is no cruiser, but a merchant vessel. I have too much at stake on board to risk an engagement with one of those bloodthirsty pirates;" and Rupert Meredith glanced anxiously toward where his wife stood, with her two boys upon either side of her.

As if flirting with the gallant vessel, the coming wind several times changed its course, now lashing its way further seaward, then returning, and again blowing landward with a force that bore the roar of the waters to the ears of those upon the Adventurer's decks.

Yet, steadily the strange sail came on, heading directly for the American, and in the lull of the wind using her long sweeps to aid her progress, for it was a large, fully-rigged and oared galley, such as was, in those days, very common in the waters of the Mediterranean, but seldom seen in the Atlantic.

"Mr. Duncan, beat to quarters, for that fellow means mischief," suddenly cried Captain Meredith, as he observed the rapid approach of the stranger, and noted with anxiety that not a breath of air filled the sails of his own vessel.

"Rupert, is there danger?" and Mrs. Meredith stood beside her husband.

"No real danger, Mary, and yet I like not the way that that storm approaches?"

"The storm! you do not then fear the Algerine?"

"Ha! who told you 'twas an Algerine?"

"It is so rumored among the passengers."

"Then disguise is useless; yonder vessel is an Algerine, and his decks are crowded with men. Now all of you must into the cabin, for here come both the storm and the corsair," and hastily embracing his wife, Rupert Meredith sprung to his post, and with the ardor of his earlier years gave his orders to his crew in tones that proved he was thoroughly in earnest.

"Mr. Duncan, we are between two fires, for yonder comes

the wind in a tornado from the land, and will strike us first. Let her head up to meet it. To the guns, men! and every man do his duty. Let fly the colors there!" And, in obedience, the stars-and-stripes were run up in defiance of the Algerine, who, in return, displayed the blue, white and red striped ensign of Algiers, the flag of a nation of corsairs.

With one of his huge triangular sails close-reefed, and his decks crowded with fierce-looking men, the Algerine swept furiously down with the gale, with every appearance of a determination to add the roar of artillery to the crash of thunder and moan of the sea.

But, when only half a mile divided the two vessels, the storm from the landward struck heavily upon the Adventurer, which staggered beneath the shock for a moment, then rising, under close-reefed mizzen-spanker, fore-course and jib, bravely stood up against the fury of the elements.

Still danger threatened, for the counter-gales, the one from seaward, the other from landward, met with a terrific shock, and, for a moment, all believed the doom of the gallant vessel was sealed. But bodily hurling from her the seas that swept her decks, carrying with them many a brave and noble form, the Adventurer bent to her work and bounded away with mad speed, borne on with the foaming, careering tempest.

An hour passed, and the storm abating in fury, Captain Meredith, for the first time, had an opportunity to look around for the strange sail, and a bitter curse arose to his lips as he observed the Algerine had also weathered the gale, and was creeping upon him from astern, having followed upon his track with the persistency of a hound.

"Duncan, we'll have to fight that fellow, I fear. Too bad, too bad, with a dozen of my best men washed away, and my rigging in a crippled condition," and Captain Meredith turned an anxious look upon his vessel, and again sought the stranger.

"He is gaining upon us; set as much sail as she'll bear, Mr. Duncan, and if we can distance him until nightfall, we'll lose him in the darkness."

Sail was at once crowded upon the Adventurer, but in vain

did she strive to elude her adversary, who still hung upon her trail, and steadily gained upon the American.

At length night came on, and Captain Meredith earnestly hoped to dodge his foe in the gloom. The course of the vessel was gradually changed, the spars were covered with canvas, no lights were lit, and away she flew over the foam-covered waters, for, though the storm had spent its force, the sea yet ran high.

"Useless, useless; he still comes on," cried Captain Meredith, as toward midnight he observed that his enemy still clung to him, and his every effort to elude him had been in vain.

"Mr. Duncan, let us try metal now, as canvas will do no good. Get ready the stern-chasers—fire!"

The bright flashes of the guns, their loud and ominous roar, startled the echoes of the deep, and aroused from their slumbers the frightened passengers of the Adventurer, and hastily every man and woman sought the deck.

"Back, all of you! This is no place for any but men, now. Duncan, drive them into the cabin, and then to your post!" cried Captain Meredith, the roar of artillery arousing the antagonism of his nature, and making him determined to no longer allow the Algerine to dog his path unpunished.

The fire of the American remained unanswered aboard the corsair, but a loud, commanding voice was heard giving orders, and still on she swept in foreboding silence, unlurt by the iron messengers of death hurled upon her, for rapidly the stern guns of the Adventurer kept up their fire.

On rushed the American; on came the Algerine; and each moment lessened the distance between them, until in half an hour the sharp nose of the corsair was hovering over the Adventurer's stern.

"Boarders to repel boarders! Hurl them into the sea!" cried Captain Meredith, as he sprung upon the poop-deck of his vessel, cutlass in hand; and nobly his men rallied around him.

Then, above the sound of the rushing waves, and cries of men, arose the loud, ringing voice of the corsair chief, as he called to his crew, in a foreign tongue, to follow him.

With one mighty bound he was on the deck of the Ad-

venturer, and, a giant in size, a single sweep of his cutlass cleared around him a space for his boarders, who pell-mell hurled themselves forward at risk of life and limb, and with fury attacked the Americans.

"Cut down the thieving dogs! Show no mercy!" commanded Captain Meredith; and nobly he headed his men. But in vain, for step by step the Americans were pressed back by the overwhelming numbers of the corsairs, whose onslaught it was impossible to stem, and in an agony of despair Rupert Meredith felt that all was lost, when, suddenly, there arose a wild cry in the rear of the Algerines, and from the cabin-way there issued a crowd of men and women, the passengers of the Adventurer coming to the aid of her crew!

Armed with what weapons they could seize, the male passengers had hurried to the deck, to be followed by their wives and children, and in the midst of the *melee* the ship's commander recognized his own wife and his two sons bravely joining in the attack.

It was comparatively a weak reserve, but the act was a bold one, and struck terror to the hearts of the Algerines, who at once commenced acting upon the defensive, where the moment before they believed all in their own hands.

In vain were the encouraging cries of the giant chief; in vain his fierce and single handed attack; his men gave way before the Americans, who, with renewed hope and energy pressed forward; and, seeking safety in flight, the corsair captain was left alone.

But his was not a nature to tamely submit to capture, and again his powerful cutlass was wielded with fearful effect, an effect that drove from his path those who dared oppose him, until Rupert Meredith suddenly confronted him.

The weapons of the two commanders clashed with terrible force, a short struggle, and the American commander lay dead upon his blood-stained deck, while the corsair, with one bound, sprung forward, and tearing from his mother's side the form of one of her sons, held him before him as a shield of safety, while he boldly fought his way toward the poop-deck, against which his galley was lashed.

One mighty sweep of his cutlass, one stupendous spring,

and the corsair chief stood upon the bows of his own vessel, still holding in his arms the form of his boy captive.

"Cut loose those grapplings," he said, in his native tongue, and his dark face lightened with evil pleasure, as he heard the despairing cry of the almost broken-hearted mother.

"Oh, God! my dead husband! my lost boy!" cried the poor woman, kneeling by the side of her dead husband, and wildly stretching forth her arms toward the pirate vessel:

"Alvah! Alvah! your poor mother will die!" she shrieked loudly, and faintly borne to her from the deck of the pirate craft came in boyish tones:

"Mamma! mamma! poor mamma!"

A cry of heartfelt sorrow went up from the deck of the Adventurer, from crew and passengers, and a yell of defiance came from the Algerines as they set their huge sails, and sped away over the storm-swept sea, baffled in the attempt to capture the ship, but leaving desolation and death behind, to mark where the vengeance of their chief had fallen with heavy hand.

CHAPTER II.

THE MOORISH STRONGHOLD.

UPON the coast of Morocco, washed by the waters of the ever-restless Atlantic ocean, and not very many miles from the town of Tetuan, rise a range of hills, which form a spur of the Atlas mountains.

In the deep recesses of these hills there stood, at the time of this story, the stronghold, and depot of El-Sebah, the corsair chief, whose attack upon the American ship Adventurer had resulted in his being driven off, but not until he had slain Captain Meredith, and bore away with him Alvah Meredith, the boy's life being held as a shield to guard that of the pirate.

In a frenzy of rage at his defeat, for El-Sebah had anticipated an easy victory, and vast riches, the corsair chief paced his deck with quick, stern step, still holding tightly in his

arms the captive child, as if unconscious almost of his existence.

"Whither shall the prow of thy vessel be turned, oh Rais?"

El-Sebah started, halted in his angry walk, and turned upon his *Bash Sota Rais*, or first officer—who had asked the question, and after a moment said :

"To the stronghold, and let my vessel fly with the wind."

Then away sped the fleet vessel over the waves, her prow turned toward the range of hills already spoken of as breaking abruptly off with the coast, and ere many hours had passed the pirate craft had anchored beneath the shadows of the cliffs.

But a short while passed, and, accompanied by the little Alvah, the corsair was rowed ashore, where he was met by a group of wild-looking horsemen, clad in the picturesque costume of the Moors, the bold riders of the desert.

"Casbin, I greet you, but a cloud rests upon my face, for Allah has given the infidel dogs of Americans a victory over my fleet galley. What of Xaripha? what of the pride of my soul, Leilah Sakel?"

"Happy at thy return, oh skimmer of the seas! 'Twas thy heart's mate espied afar off thy galley's sail, and sent me to guard thee home to nestle in the joy of her love."

"It is well, Casbin, sheik of horsemen; and see, I have brought with me a young infidel bound that he may be my slave;" and El-Sebah turned toward poor Alvah, who, though greatly frightened and distressed at his position, kept up a brave heart and bold front before his captor.

Still holding to the child, the corsair Rais—or chief—mounted a horse, held for him by a man, and calling to Casbin, the commander of his horsemen, to follow, darted away like a bird, scaling the steep hillside toward his stronghold.

Far up among the hills, and reached by a pathway almost impassable seemingly, was a level plateau, covered here and there with dark groves of trees, and presenting, as it were, a natural and artificial spot for an encampment or village.

From no point, excepting the narrow pathway, was the plateau to be reached by horsemen, and herein was its

strength, for otherwise there appeared slight means of defense, and in fact little was needed.

Here and there, mounted in advantageous positions, were several guns of light caliber, evidently taken from some ship, and back of them ran a crumbling wall, the ruin of an old Christian church, so it was said, built there in ages gone by, for in earlier days missionaries had sought that far-away land, and preached amid the wild Berbers the religion of Christ.

Around the guns stood a few dozen men surveying the approach of the cavalcade with El-Sebah at its head, while in the rear of the wall was a range of huts, small but comparatively comfortable.

A few hundred yards back of the fortress was a small mountain stream, and beyond this arose terrace upon terrace of verdure and beauty, with luxuriant groves upon every side, and here, peeping forth from their midst, and commanding an extensive view for miles and miles of land and sea, was, strange to say, an English-built mansion, possessing a homelike look of comfort strangely out of place there in the mountains of Morocco.

From the broad and spacious veranda of the mansion the eye went seaward until lost upon the horizon, and again to northward and eastward the gaze fell upon level plains, hills, rolling and rugged steeps, with the hamlets of a wild race here and thiere dotting the scene.

Beneath the shelter of the hillside, whereon was built the mansion, was a scene of animation, a camp, a village of Moors, for here dwelt the followers, and their families of the great El-Sebah, the famous rover.

Hut after hut, tent after tent rested upon the broad hillside, and faced the running stream before spoken of, and with their numerous occupants stretched upon the ground, grouped here and there in earnest conversation, or riding like the wind, over the terraced plateau, the scene was one of rare beauty, picturesque in the extreme, and romantic enough to gladden the eye of the most practical beholder.

A large number of horses were also visible dotting the plains and grazing upon the hillsides, while here and there interspersed among them could be seen the ever patient and uncomplaining camel.

Standing upon the veranda of the mansion were two persons, the one a lovely woman, of scarcely more than twenty-five, who, though clad in the tight-fitting caftan, and loose trowsers that comprise the Moorish costume, was evidently not a native of that land, for in her beautiful face were traceable the close-cut features of pure Spanish descent.

The eyes were large, dreamy to sadness, the mouth full, ripe, and also tinged with an expression of sadness, a look of forced resignation it might be, while the rich olive complexion, and dark hair braided and rolled like a turban around the proud head, but added to her loveliness.

The face, neck and hands were bronzed berry-brown by the sun of that intense land ; the figure, above the medium height, was perfect in mold and graceful in every motion.

Such was Xaripha, the wife of El-Sebah, the desperate rover of the high seas.

The companion of the lovely woman was a miniature counterpart of herself—a girl of scarcely more than five years of age, a fairy sprite, who possessed the same lovely eyes, only touched, perhaps, with a little more fire than dwelt in the depths of her mother's, a complexion a shade darker, an expression more sunshiny, for yet to her girlhood had come no sorrow, no storm-cloud to cast in gloom the golden horizon of her young life.

Little Leilah Sakel, the only child of El-Sebah and Xaripha, the little mountain rosebud breaking forth into bloom there in the wild land of the Moor, with her every glance of the eye falling upon the broad expanse of nature, spread like a panorama before her ; poor little Leilah Sakel, yet too young and innocent to know that her father was the renowned corsair of the Straits, the dreaded sea-rover, upon whose head civilized nations had set a price, yet too young to learn the story of her mother's life—how she became the wife of a corsair chief.

The gaze of Xaripha was upon the approaching form of her husband, who was coming up the terraced pathway toward his mountain home, his anchorage, his haven of rest when not skimming the seas in search of adventure.

"Here, birdling, here comes thy father. Greet him with thy sweet voice and merry smile," she said, turning toward

her child, who was also interested in the approach of the horsemen.

Xaripha's tones were full and mellow, and she spoke not in the language of the Moors, but in the pure, musical Castilian tongue, and at the words the little Leilah Sakel clapped her tiny hands and trilled forth a laugh full of joy and welcome.

A moment more and El-Sebah reached the spot, sprung from his steed, and while clasping his daughter with one arm, with the other encircled the slight waist of Xaripha, while he said, in the figurative style of the Moor, but yet speaking in Spanish :

"Life of my heart, once more I greet you ; pearl beyond price, place those tiny arms once more around my neck."

"El Sebah, you have returned much sooner than you anticipated, and in surprise I saw your sail break the horizon, for but three days have passed since you departed," said Xaripha.

"Yes, my mountain bird, I have returned, and with the stain of defeat upon my bright blade, for I met and chased a vessel of the free Americans beyond the seas ! By Allah, and the Prophet's beard, they fought well, and I was driven from their decks ; but, beloved, am I not revenged ? this is the son of their commander, whom I slew with my own hand."

Then, for the first time, the eyes of Xaripha fell upon Alvah Meredith, who stood near, gazing with rapture alternately upon the lovely woman and little child, and apparently no longer dreading harm in the presence of the beautiful.

"Poor, poor boy !" and the eyes of Xaripha filled with tears, as she turned toward her husband, and in reproving tones said

"El Sebah, how could you—"

"He saved my life, for I need him as a shield to regain my vessel unhurt. He is a dog of an American, and shall be my slave. My veriest hound will I make him in return for the injury that his race have done me."

The rover spoke fiercely, and with terrible energy, but as he ceased speaking Leilah Sakel turned toward the lonely boy, the eyes of the two met, and child though she was she saw in the gaze bent on her, admiration, and unhesitatingly as is the wont of children when they see one they can trust,

she sprung toward Alvah, and raised her rosebud mouth for a kiss, and freely was it given by the boy while his cheeks were wet with tears, wrung from his heart by kindness.

"See, El-Sebah, will you make him your slave? Has not Leilah Sakel already drawn him into our love?"

"No, poor lonely boy; come to my heart and let me be as a mother to you. Do not say me nay, chief," continued Xaripha, as she saw a dark frown upon the man's face, and understanding the look and gesture rather than the words, for she had spoken in Spanish, Alvah stepped forward, with Leilah Sakel still clinging to him, and resting his head upon Xaripha's bosom, burst into a torrent of weeping. Love and sympathy had broken through his heart's mask, where before, boy that he was, he had proudly maintained his childish dignity.

"Xaripha, you and Leilah Sakel have conquered; the boy will not be my slave, but as my son, and into your care I intrust him. You speak the tongue of the Americans, so ask of him his name."

"Ah, I had forgotten—you are English, are you not?" said Xaripha, speaking in a broken accent that but rendered her still more charming.

Glad to hear his native tongue spoken, there in the Moorish hills, the boy's face brightened up, a smile hovered amid the tears, like an April shower of sunshine and rain.

"Oh, no, I am an American; we speak English in that land."

"What is your name, poor boy?"

"Alvah Meredith. My father commanded the ship that was boarded by the pirates, and he was killed, and poor mother is alone with only brother Noel."

"Did you see your father fall?" asked Xaripha, with some anxiety in her tones.

"No, lady, he was cut down by one of the pirates, and then the chief there seized me and sprung aboard his vessel."

"Allah be praised!" exclaimed Xaripha, using, as she did, in excitement, the name of Allah instead of God.

"What, lady?"

"I say you are now to be my son, and the son of El Sebah—"

A frown darkened the clear brow of the boy and observing it, Xaripha, hastily continued:

"El-Sebah is an officer of the navy of Morocco, and in boarding your vessel he but obeyed the orders of his sultan he regrets that you were taken from your mother's care, but now I will be a mother to you, El-Sebah as a father to you, and Leilah Sakel will be your little sister."

At the mention of his parents, tears again dimmed the boy's eyes, but when little Leilah Sakel was spoken of, his face again brightened, and seeing it, Xaripha continued, quickly:

"Alvah is your name, you say? Well, it is a pretty name, and you will not have to change it.

"Come in now and I will do all I can to make you happy. Come El-Sebah, come, Sheik Casbin, let us into the house and partake of wine and sweet bread;" and leading the way, Xaripha entered the mansion, which was large, comfortable, and furnished with a mixture of the European and Oriental, with every luxury, but no useless appurtenances to take up room, for here and there were soft and inviting divans, velvet rugs, stands for refreshments, a harp, a guitar, and portable cases filled with books in several different languages.

It was a comfortable, luxurious home, there in those Moorish hills, reminding one of the far East and Europe commingled, for all that the heart could desire surrounded Xaripha in the stronghold of El Sebah.

And here, in this corsair home, were passed the earlier years of Alvah Meredith, the boy captive, who, in the kindness of Xaripha, whom he soon learned to love as though she were his own mother, and the little Leilah Sakel, who was his constant companion and friend, almost forgot, as time rolled on the remembrance of his far-away American land, his mother, his brother and his dead father, killed by the chief that with anxious regard appeared to watch tenderly over his budding life, severe, it might be, but ever kind, ever generous to the lonely lad.

Or, if Alvah remembered those that were dear to him in his earlier days of childhood—if he thought ever of the far-away home and his companions, it soon became as a dream, a pleasant memory—the shadow of a reality, and in his new as-

sociations, his new-found companionship, he became comparatively happy, and readily entered into the scenes and life around him with his whole soul.

CHAPTER III.

HASSAN, THE TURK.

SEVEN years before the attack on the Adventurer by the corsair galley, there dwelt upon the Spanish coast a noble Don with his wife and only child, a daughter of seventeen, beautiful as a dream of love, an heiress, accomplished and most lovely in character.

The parents, Don Emanuel Cavallo and his lovely wife, were wrapt up in their lovely daughter, and from her earliest years had they devoted their every effort to make her an accomplished and elegant woman, and from one capital to another, amid the courtiers of Europe, had they roamed with the maiden, who, as she budded into womanhood, became a reigning belle, the toast at clubs, and the admired of all.

In their beautiful home by the sea, the lovely lady delighted to dwell, content in its home-like joys, and loving more the roar of the surf, the howl of the storm-swept waters, the sighing of the winds and the music of the birds, than the brazen notes of music, the hum of society, and the flattery of a hollow life in the crowded cities of the world.

Thus had seventeen years left their sunny footprints upon the maiden's brow, and yet her heart had never been touched with love, but beat free and unscathed by a wound from the fickle and persistent little god, Cupid.

One afternoon, in company with her parents, she was enjoying a delightful sail upon the ocean, in a yacht belonging to the Don, when the wind, dying out suddenly, the small vessel was borne with the tide, and drifted miles and miles seaward, until at length the land sunk from sight with the setting sun. Helpless, without chart or compass, Don Emanuel was forced

to confess himself at a loss to know what to do, and that their position was most precarious should a storm arise.

Glancing narrowly around the horizon, the Spaniard saw afar off the gloomy token of a coming tempest, and his heart sunk within him, but to his wife and daughter he showed no sign of anxiety, while he stripped the little craft to meet the shock that ere long he knew would strike her with terrible force.

An hour passed, and then the roaring, the howling winds, mingling in chorus, came down upon the devoted little vessel which met the attack bravely, was dismasted, half-filled with water and left a wreck upon the furious waves.

Still clinging for their lives, the Don, his wife and daughter were not borne away to a watery grave, as were several of the crew; and yet hope seemed forever gone from them, death, a wild, terrible death, there in that waste of waters, alone and where no human cry for help could be heard, stared them in the face, when lo! suddenly a bright light gleams over the sea, gilding and rouging the crested waves, and a loud, cheering voice hails them in their native tongue:

"Ahoy, the wreck!"

With terrible energy, Don Emanuel answered the hail, and then above the glad vision of the poor struggling beings, towed aloft the slender spars of a large vessel, a galley of war, which came up in the wind and lay to, while, defying the storm, a boat put forth from her to succor the drowning.

Steadily and persistently the frail vessel breasted the waves, guided by a helmsman whose eye never once swerved from the sinking yacht, and soon the agony of suspense was over, the Don and all were taken from the sea to find themselves the occupants of the cabin of the galley, whose commander did all in his power to render them comfortable.

As soon as they had changed their wet clothing for others, kindly furnished them by the galley's captain, the Don sent for their preserver to visit them in the cabin, and obedient to the summons, there entered a tall, finely-formed man, possessing wonderful muscular power, and a face dark, strangely different from that of other men, and one wherein dwelt intellect, power and courage, with a certain winning look peculiarly attractive.

"I am Don Emanuel Cavallo, of Spain, and I would know whom it is I have to thank as the preserver of my wife, my daughter, and myself," said the Spaniard, advancing and warmly extending his hand, while he gazed upon the remarkable looking man before him with undisguised admiration.

"I am Hassan Aztec, a commander of a galley of war in the service of the Sultan of Turkey," answered the officer, bowing low, while his earnest dark eyes lit with admiration upon the superb Xaripha, with an expression wholly undisguised, and when the Don presented him to both his wife and daughter, he knelt with exquisite grace and lightly touched his burning lips to each fair hand.

"Methinks you were wafted away from the Spanish coast; so seek refreshments and rest, and ere sunlight, you shall be once more at home," said Hassan Aztec, in tones peculiarly soft.

The morn broke in calm beauty, the Spanish coast was in full view, and glimmering through the foliage could be seen the villa of Don Emanuel.

After a light breakfast of fruit and black coffee on board the galley, the Spaniards were conducted to the shore by the Turkish commander, who was overwhelmed with kind thanks, and bade often to drop anchor within the shelter of the little cove near the villa.

And often did he accept the invitation, and ere many months had passed, he became the lover of the Spanish maiden, and still more, her acknowledged suitor.

But, dark stories were afloat regarding the galley and her commander; some said that the Turkish captain was not a Turk, others that the craft was an Algerine vessel of war, and still more declared that Hassan Aztec was himself a corsair.

For awhile Don Emanuel unheeded these rumors, but at length was compelled to believe his guest was not all he seemed, and with painful emotion, but firmly, he forbade him his house.

Hassan listened attentively to the Don, and then begged for one more interview with the maiden, after which he declared he would depart forever from the villa.

The interview was granted, and then in a few words Has-

man told the distressed girl that he must leave her forever unless she would fly with him aboard his galley.

A moment the young girl, who had learned to almost worship her lover, hesitated, and then said, slowly :

" Hassan, you are my love, my life—I will go ;" but as she spoke, there came the sound of flying hoofs, a great shout was raised without the villa, and loud voices echoed in denunciation.

With a bound Hassan sprung to the window, and discovered a crowd of horsemen, soldiers in fact, and a few words that he heard caused him to set his teeth and loose his cimeter in its scabbard.

Then, placing a gold whistle to his lips, he blew half a dozen shrill, quick calls, and seizing the maiden firmly around the waist, he raised her in his arms as though she was a child, and with drawn sword and threatening look, strode from the room out into the garden, which sloped away down to the water's edge, where his boat awaited him, and the crew of which he already perceived were, in answer to his call, rushing to his rescue.

A loud shout arose from the group of horsemen when they discovered the flight of Hassan, and with cries of triumph, they rushed toward him with drawn weapons.

" Back, you infidel dogs, or eat your own dust !" cried the Turk, brought to bay, and he turned fiercely upon his pursuers, who dismounted and rushed upon him.

Still holding firmly to the maiden, who, fortunately for her, had fainted, and lay unconscious upon his broad bosom, Hassan met the attack boldly, and by a few sweeps of his formidable weapon sent several Spaniards to the ground ; but they pressed upon him in great numbers, and inconvenienced as he was by the maiden, he doubtless would have been taken had not a dozen fierce seamen rushed upon the scene and bravely beat back the assailants.

" Drive them to perdition—at them, ye true believers !" cried the commander of the galley, and fighting as they went, the seamen retreated toward their boat, keeping back an overwhelming force of Spaniards by their desperate daring and determination to save their chief or perish with him.

It was a close and terrible struggle, for the Spaniards, un-

der the leadership of Don Emanuel, who now was convinced of the perfidy of his guest, strove all in his power to tear from his grasp the daughter he loved so dearly, and whom his wife's loud cries implored him to save.

Each moment, more Spaniards arrived, some soldiers, others country people, and all joined in the pursuit, led on by the encouraging voice of the young officer who commanded the troops, that had been sent there to capture the Turkish commander. Thus, it was believed that at length Hassan would be taken and the maiden rescued, when, with a demoniacal yell of hatred, dark forms were seen coming from the shore, and the next instant half the crew of the galley appeared upon the scene, for from their vessel they had observed the danger of their leader, and had hastened to the rescue.

Beaten back by the terrible onslaught of the seamen, the volunteers broke, and the troops becoming demoralized, turned and fled for their lives, in spite of the rallying call of their young officer, and the entreaties of the Don to save his daughter.

One loud shout of triumph, and Hassan and his men had conquered.

"To the boats—quick, or yet you'll be defiled by burial in an infidel land," tersely ordered the chief, and quickly the march was made to the beach, the boats were filled and pushed off, and in a few moments the maiden, but half conscious, found herself on board the galley, parted, perhaps forever, from her loved parents and the land of her nativity.

CHAPTER IV.

EL-SEBAH.

QUICKLY weighing anchor, the fleet galley spread her white wings, and like a bird of prey flew away over the sea, soon sinking the shores of Spain, and the misery she had caused there, far astern.

"Lady, listen to me while I unfold to you a page of my

"ife ; listen, and judge me not too harshly, for love has turned me toward you with the adoration I hold to Allah!"

The maiden started, her cheek flushed, and then paled, as with tear-dimmed eyes she stood upon the galley's deck and longingly gazed upon her native land fast fading from view.

Having attended to the duties devolving upon him in the management of his vessel, Hassan Aztec had approached the spot where the maiden stood, and addressed her in the soft tones he so well knew how to use.

"Lady, you said you would come with me, and hence I brought you ; otherwise I would never have torn you with violence from the sheltering arms of your parents.

"Now I would tell you *who* and *what* I am, and ask you to become my wife, for I am shaping my course for a spot where a priest may be found to unite us.

"If, when you have heard all, you then desire to return to your parents, by Allah, as pure as yon rift of snow floating in the blue sky, will I give you back to your father's care, even though I break my very heart-strings in dragging you from my bosom."

"Speak on, Hassan—I will listen," said the maiden, in tones almost inaudible.

"Listen, then, lady, and judge me not too harshly.

"Nearly forty years agone there was cast away upon the coast of Morocco an English vessel of war, and in the storm nearly all of her crew perished ; but a few were saved, and among them was a young midshipman, who was at once seized by a wandering tribe and borne off into slavery and captivity.

"Years he remained thus, but then, he was brought to the notice of the sheik of the tribe, by rescuing his daughter, who would be the next ruler after her father, as he had no male heir, from the power of a band of desert-robbers.

"Between this maiden, beautiful as thou art, lady—for the daughters of the Berbers of the hills are often as lovely as a dream—and the young Englishman there sprung up a feeling of sincere love, which was disapproved of by the sheik, because he wished, by the marriage of his daughter with

some neighboring chief, to make his own powerful tribe more formidable still.

" Refusing, therefore, to sanction the love of his only child with an infidel dog, as the Englishman was called, the young lovers took the matter into their own hands, fled by night from the land of the Berbers, and after numerous hardships and dangers reached the sea-coast, where they escaped on board of an English vessel, then in the port to which they had fled.

" Returning thus, after many years, and when he was believed lost, the young Englishman was welcomed as from the grave, was received back into the title, honors, and wealth that were really his, and there, in the church of England, he became the husband of the brave girl who had forsakeh all to follow him.

" Once more entering the service of his country, he rose in command, and was sent to the shores of America, carrying with him his Berber wife and child, a son.

" There, on that Western World, waged a terrible war, a war with the mother country, England, and her offspring, America, and while fighting for the flag of his native land, fell the brave officer, slain by American foes.

" Broken-hearted at the death of her husband, and with no tie to bind her to any land but her own, after his death, the Berber wife, taking with her her boy, the pledge of her slain hero's love, again sought the passionate East, again landed upon the shores of Morocco, and once more trod the soil wherein slept the ashes of her fathers.

" The sheik, her father, was dead, and the tribe had no ruler, hence disorder and confusion reigned supreme ; but not for long was it so, for gladly did they rally around their chief's daughter ; she was placed in power, and ere long order and peace once more visited the Berber tribe.

" Lady, those of whom I have spoken were my father and my mother ; she who gave birth to me now sleeps in the old Moorish hills, and there I passed my earlier years under the care and guidance of one whose experience in other lands had taught her much of the world.

" As I grew in years I longed to become, as was my father, a sailor ; to see other lands, to find adventure upon the high

It was the ambitious idea of my youth, and I at once decided to become a pupil of some of our brave ocean commanders.

"Hence, I sought the sea-coast, shortly after the death of my mother, and soon found myself on board the galley of the celebrated rover El Barek.

"Beneath his command I remained until my twenty-first year, and then my courage and ability caused the sultan to place me in charge of a separate vessel, and I became an independent sea rover—are you listening, lady, to all I tell you?"

"Every word; go on, Hassan."

Hassan paused a moment, and then continued:

"In telling you I was a Turkish officer, I deceived you; but then I knew not what to say, for from the waves I had taken you, and found that you were the one woman in the world to me; the ideal of my boyhood, the reality of my manhood years, and determined that you, a Spaniard, should not know me as I am, I told you I was Hassan Aztec, of the Turkish navy.

"Lady, I spoke not truly to you. I am a Moor, in the service of the sultan, who knows my lineage, and trusts me wholly.

"Had I told you I was a Moor, never again would I been allowed to live in the sunshine of your smiles, never again would your sweet voice have made music in my heart, for we would have been as strangers then, parted forever, you to cling with love to some man your father gave you to in marriage; I to become a listless wanderer over the wide seas, an oarless bark, a mere waif, drifting with the wind and tide, with no haven of rest, no anchorage, until I fell, at some future day, upon my galley's blood-stained decks."

The chief paused and gazed intently into the beautiful eyes of the maiden, who said:

"If you are not Hassan, what then is your name?"

"Lady, voluntarily you left home, country, and kindred to fly with me, and now I beg of you cast me not from thy sight into outer darkness, forevermore.

"Take me to thy heart, and nestle thou like a tired birdling in the shelter of my love.

" My name may have been stained with infamy ; bloody deeds may have been mine, and o'er the waters I may be branded from sea to sea, as an inhuman monster ; but whatever I may have been, take me as I am now ; tell me you can love me ; tell me you'll be my pearl beyond price, set in my love, and I'll bless you ; aye, I'll call down the blessings of your God upon you ; I'll cry aloud for Allah to hold you in the hollow of his hand, and shower the kindness of his heart upon you."

" Whatever you are, I will love you ; you deceived me regarding your nationality, but I forgive you, if 'twas to gain my love, for without you what would I be ?

" Yes, I idolize you, and to the uttermost parts of the earth will I flee with you—for thy God shall be my God, thy creed shall be my creed."

" God is God, and Mohammed is his Prophet, and may he bless you, my beautiful flower of Spain, plucked rudely from thy native soil to transplant in the wild hills of Morocco."

The chief spoke fervently, his head raised in prayer, and then, after a moment, he said :

" Maiden, hast ever heard of El-Sebah, the corsair ?"

" What, he whom men call accursed—he whom the civilized world cry out against—the terror of the seas—a monster in human form ? Yes, I have indeed heard of him, and I shudder when I hear his name."

'Lady, I am El-Sebah !'

" Holy Mary, mother of Jesus, help me now !" almost shrieked the poor maiden, as the fearful truth dawned upon her, and tottering backward, she would have fallen, had not the strong arm of the corsair chief upheld her ; but recovering herself in a moment, she exclaimed, excitedly :

" You El-Sebah ? Then he has been sadly maligned, for you are no monster inhuman ; no, you are he whom I love more than all the world."

Thus met Xaripha Cavallo and the renowned corsair, El-Sebah, and true to her woman's love, the beautiful maiden went with him to a small seaport on the coast of Portugal, and there, through the services of a priest, the two were united in matrimony, after which El-Sebah carried his bride to his stronghold, with which the kind reader is already acquainted

CHAPTER V.

AFTER MANY YEARS.

UPON a pleasant afternoon in the year 18—, a swift-sailing sloop of war, flying the Stars and Stripes, was seen cruising slowly along the coast of Africa, apparently searching for an anchorage ground, for the glasses of the officers were eagerly scanning every indenture of the shore.

In the spacious cabin of the war-vessel reclined a young man upon a divan ; his face was pale, almost white, from suffering, and his left arm was tightly bandaged and rested upon his bosom. Though reclining, the fine physique of the young officer—for he wore the undress uniform of a captain in the United States navy—was plainly discernible, and the face, though pinched with suffering, was strikingly handsome and winning, while upon the brow rested intellect and refinement.

A moment he lay quietly, and then touched a bell near by. Immediately it was answered by a cabin-boy.

"Send the executive officer to me."

A moment more and there entered the cabin a young officer, who remarked :

" You sent for me, Captain Meredith ?"

" Yes, Howard—you must command this landing. Go in person ; see the party safely ashore, and if no protection will be given them in the towns, return, all of you, and I will run up to Salee."

" I'll attend to it, sir ; but I am very sorry your accident disables you at this time."

" Yes, I am of little use. A strange fatality seems to attend me on this coast—for, when a mere boy, my father was slain here, and my twin brother carried off by a pirate ; then, when a midshipman, you know, I was on board the ill-fated Philadelphia ; again we were, in the Hornet, nearly wrecked but a short distance from here, and now I am laid up from a broken arm."

The young commander spoke earnestly, and then, with just a shadow of a sailor's superstition, added :

" I wonder if here I will find my death ? "

Fifteen years have passed since the attack upon the *Adventurer*, by El-Sebah, and in that time changes have come upon Noel Meredith, who, with his widowed mother, returned to America, and entered the naval service, when twelve years of age, of the United States.

A strange fatality had carried him, during his brilliant naval career, to the coast of Africa, where sorrow and trouble had first come upon him ; and in the loss of the *Philadelphia* in 1804, the shipwreck of the *Hornet*, and the breaking of his arm, dire misfortune had seemed to dog his footsteps.

Being appointed to the command of the sloop of war *Blood-hound*, twenty guns, Noel Meredith had received orders to cruise upon the African coast, for the protection of American vessels against the corsairs who infested those waters, and after a pleasant and swift run out, had arrived at his cruising-ground in time to be of service to an English yachting party, that had come to grief in a storm.

In the transfer of the passengers from the yacht to the vessel of war, a wave had dashed the boat, in which was Captain Meredith, against the ship's side, and unluckily had broken his arm, and otherwise injured him in such a way as to confine him to his cabin for some time.

The English party, consisting of a nobleman, Lord Henry Hargrove, his daughter, Evangeline, accompanied by her governess and companion, Mrs. Thornton, and a London lawyer of distinction, the Honorable Edgar Seymour, willingly accepted the hospitalities of the United States commander, while the damaged yacht was sent to the nearest seaport where it could be repaired.

The mission carrying Lord Hargrove to Africa was one of great importance to both himself and his family connections, so he stated, and he begged to be put ashore at some point where they could find a small place to reside until the completion of the enterprise ; hence Noel Meredith had ordered his officers to keep a bright look-out ashore for some spot where a safe landing could be effected, and a desirable anchorage found.

Ere long Howard May, the executive officer, reported to his commander that all was in readiness for the landing, and soon after the third cutter, in charge of the young lieutenant, left the ship's side with a full crew, and the English guests.

Leaving the ship riding quietly upon the waves of a small, rock bound harbor, the cutter pulled cautiously away, until after a while her keel grated upon the beach, and all leaped ashore and started inland for some sign of habitation.

Hardly had they proceeded half a mile, when they were startled by a loud cry in a language wholly unknown to them, and a moment after they were surrounded by some fifty wild horsemen, all armed with long guns, and riding like Centaurs as they circled around the surprised and frightened party, urging their horses to their utmost speed.

"Miss Hargrove, will you and Mrs. Thornton place yourselves flat upon the ground? Now, boys, form a circle around these ladies, and await my orders to fire," cried Howard May, with seamanlike promptness and courage.

The half-dozen sailors instantly obeyed and stood upon the defensive; but they were a mere handful to contend against the increasing numbers of the wild riders of the desert, and the young officer felt that it was a hopeless case should he be attacked; but, at any rate, he determined to die game, and in his fine-looking face was no sign of fear—only one of sorrow at the fate of the beautiful maiden, whom he swore to die defending, should his force be ridden down.

Each moment the horsemen drew nearer and nearer, and then, unheeding the white handkerchief held up by Lord Hargrove, prepared to rush down upon the devoted little band.

But lo! suddenly a loud, commanding voice, ringing with anger, is heard shouting forth an order in a strange tongue, and a change is at once perceptible among the riders, while there appears upon the scene, as if by magic, a single horseman, mounted upon a steed of midnight blackness and wonderful beauty, caparisoned in gold and gem-studded trappings, that denote his master as one high in authority.

And the rider—every eye is turned upon him, the Moors glancing in fear, the Christian party in hope, for in the su-

perb-looking specimen of manhood before them, they feel that there can be no wickedness.

Bronzed by exposure, but with the rich blood mantling his face, with eyes black, piercing and threatening, the mouth firm, the hair dark and waving, with no sign of beard upon his almost boyish countenance, the stranger looked indeed a very ideal of a man—a being, as it were, of other ages; for his attire was that of a Moor, but costly in the extreme, while the silken turban was sparkling with a wealth of precious stones, as did also the hilt of his massive cimeter glitter with diamonds and rubies.

"You are strangers—I hope not shipwrecked upon this inhospitable shore," said the horseman, speaking, as if at a venture, in Spanish, while he drew rein within a few feet of the little party.

"We are strangers, but not shipwrecked. From our vessel's mast-head we descried a town somewhere hereabout, and landed to seek it, when set upon by this wild troop," answered Howard May, involuntarily raising his cap to the Moor, as though to a superior.

A smile hovered upon the horseman's face, as he said:

"You are deceived in your ideas of distance, as is often the case in this atmosphere, and on this coast; the town you saw is distant twenty miles, and to reach it without danger and fatigue, you had better return to your vessel and land at a point some thirty miles further up the coast."

"I thank you, sir—we all thank you; for, had it not been for your timely appearance, I fear these wild-looking horsemen would have ridden us down," put in Lord Hargrove.

"Yes; they are the desert bandits, and show no mercy—"

"What! are you a chief of bandits?" exclaimed Evangeline Hargrove, with sudden earnestness, for she spoke Spanish.

The bronzed face turned crimson for an instant, and then the eyes lit up with admiration as they fell upon the beautiful girl, for the maiden was one of the most lovely of England's fair daughters; but bending low in his saddle, he replied:

"Lady, the bandit, the herdsman and the soldier alike come under my dominion; also, like this gallant officer and his

brave lads, I am a sailor," and the horseman pointed toward Howard May and his crew.

"But you waste time now; the heavens are threatening, so I'll see you to your boats;" and turning to the desert riders he addressed them in a few words unknown to the strange party.

But eagerly they looked on, and discovered that there was some trouble regarding them, for a burly horseman, evidently the immediate sheik of the band, rode forward and spoke angrily and with quick gestures to his chief.

The bronzed face lightened, the eyes fairly scintillated, while the voice trembled slightly, as the Moor, raising his hand in a commanding way, again said a few words unintelligible to the small party of Christians.

But the burly sheik still hesitated, and then, with a motion as rapid as a flash of light, the glittering cimeter was drawn, the spurs sunk into the sides of his steed, and with a bound the handsome rider was alongside the horseman; the bright blade circled through the air, and unheeding the wild shriek of Evangeline, fell with dull sound upon the turbanned head, and with a force that clove it through and through.

Instantly pitching the weapon toward one of the band, the chief said a few words, the stained blade was wiped clean, and dismounting, on bended knee the man returned it to its owner, while immediately after the wild horsemen turned, and at racing speed dashed away, leaving the lifeless body of their sheik lying where it had fallen.

"Lady, pardon a seeming act of cruelty. The man whom I have just slain dared to dispute my authority, when I ordered him to withdraw his band and leave you unmolested; his wild men will remember the lesson I have taught them. Now come, for already have you delayed too long, I fear;" and the strange man spoke with no sign of emotion, softly, and with a remarkable pathos in his tones, while, dismounting and calling to his horse to follow, he led the way toward the beach.

CHAPTER VI.

THE "BROOM OF THE SEAS."

ARRIVING upon the strand a fair view of the ocean could be seen, and then, for the first time, Howard May saw that a storm was approaching, and remarked it to the strange guide.

"Yes, and your vessel lies in a harbor that is most treacherous in a storm. Come; you must go with me, and I will take you by another channel to your ship."

"But can not we return the way we came? I—"

"The tide now running in it is impossible to stem; your ship is distant four miles; follow my advice," answered the horseman, firmly; and, as if he deemed it unnecessary to parley more, he took from his girdle a small gold whistle, and blew one shrill blast thereon.

As if with the aid of magic, a boat suddenly shot forth from a small cove where it had been concealed, and at the same time half a dozen horsemen rode toward the spot, coming from the interior of a small grove of trees.

The strange chief instantly spoke a few words in the Moorish tongue and one of the horsemen took the rein of his steed, and away the party darted, after which the Moor addressed the boatmen, who were attired in the garb peculiar to seamen of their country.

By this time the party of Christians had entered their boat, the chief sprung into his own cutter, and beckoning to the American barge to follow, led the way along the shore, around a point of land, through a rock-bound basin, into a small bay beyond, wherein was anchored a remarkable-looking vessel, possessing a long and narrow black hull, low in the water, and looking thoroughly American in build, while she was lateen-rigged with three tall masts capable of bearing an immense pressure of canvas, for upon the taffrail was stepped another small mast, that could be shipped or unshipped at pleasure, and by the sail that it would carry an additional speed could be given to the craft.

Besides her sailing capacity, the cruiser showed a number of small oar-ports upon either side, proving that as many as fifty heavy sweeps could be put in use if there was need of them.

Thoroughly armed with nine heavy guns, the masts were surrounded with brackets containing muskets, cutlasses, boarding-spikes and hatchets, while the decks of the beautiful and graceful vessel were crowded with men, whose high fez caps made them present a picturesque and striking appearance.

"Yonder is my vessel, and I must make you my guests for awhile, at least until I can save your own ship from the certain destruction that will come upon her if she remains at her present anchorage until yonder rising storm breaks," said the chief, as his cutter, followed by the American, darted alongside the cruiser.

Springing on board, the Moor gallantly aided the ladies to mount the low sides, and then invited his unexpected guests to enter the cabin, while the galley got under weigh.

Surprised at all they saw, the party descended into the spacious cabin, and were struck still more with delighted astonishment at the scene of Oriental magnificence that met their view.

"Leilah Sakel!" called the Moor, softly, and there came a bird-like answer from the gilded lattice-work of a door, which evidently opened into a state-room. "We have guests," simply said the Moor, and he spread luxurious cushions around for the party to be seated, while calling a slave he ordered refreshments of fruit, wine and black coffee.

Suddenly the gilded lattice-work was thrown aside, and there bounded forth a perfect dream of womanly beauty, a bronzed fairy as it were, from some enchanted isle, who, though grown from girlhood to womanhood, since the reader last beheld her, will be readily recognized as Leilah Sakel, the only child of El-Sebah, the noted corsair chief, and Xaripha Cavallo.

Though twenty summers' suns had lightly fallen upon her fair head, Leilah Sakel appeared little more than fifteen, though the rounded form, graceful and beautiful in every curve, and the shadow-haunting eyes caused her to appear most womanly.

Around her raven locks was wound a turban of scarlet

silk embroidered in gold and silver, as was also the tight-fitting waist and loose flowing trowsers, gathered at the ankles, and displaying the delicate feet with their diamond-studded slippers.

A strange look came upon the face of Evangeline Hargrove, as she gazed upon this vision of beauty, and arose from her seat, as the Moor said, softly :

" Lielah Sakel, these are our guests for awhile," and then he continued :

" In the charge of this maiden I will leave you while I attend to my duties upon deck. Would you, sir, like to accompany me ?"

Thus appealed to, Howard May bowed consent, though with a sigh he left the presence of the beautiful Moorish maiden.

Arriving on deck, the young American officer found that his crew had been invited aboard, where they were indulging in refreshments, and that preparations were making to leave the bay.

The galley-slaves were ordered to the sweeps, the sailing crew took their places ready to spread the cruiser with canvas at a moment's notice, and with admiration and the eye of a thorough seaman, Howard May saw the perfect order and discipline aboard the Moorish vessel.

Soon the party from the cabin ascended to the deck, and with some alarm Lord Hargrove observed the total change in the heavens, which were rapidly becoming overcast with storm-clouds, and imparting their foreboding gloom to the ocean, making it look as black as ink.

Rounding a rocky headland, under full pressure of the heavy sweeps, the galley sped on until she felt the light wind that was blowing, and descried the saucy-looking American sloop of war, lying at anchor some miles inland.

A word from the chief, and immediately the sweeps were withdrawn, and the tapering spars were bent with sail, which caused the fleet vessel to skim along swiftly through the water, heading directly toward the American ship, which suddenly put on an air of commotion as the galley was discovered.

" I will run you down, so as to leave you but a short row

to your vessel, which must at once be got ready for sea, and her sails reefed close down to meet the storm," remarked the Moor to Howard May.

"The anchorage we believed a good one, sir, but I will of course follow your advice."

"Of course you will. I will guide you out by leading the way, for it would be impossible for you to get to sea without a pilot, as against the storm and fearful current now setting in, the swell of the sea before the storm, you could make no headway, and therefore must run the gantlet of the islands."

"See!" exclaimed Lord Hargrove, suddenly, "they have taken us for a corsair, and are beating to quarters;" and that the strange galley was believed to be coming on a hostile visit was now evident from the movements of the American.

"You have your cutter's flag; let it be run up to the fore, and also a white flag shall be shown," exclaimed the chief; but still it had only the effect of causing a gun to be fired across the bows of the galley, for in those days the corsairs of the eastern seas were wont to try every artifice to capture prizes.

"I'll come to, and you'll have to row the rest of the way, for I would not like to receive a broadside now;" and as the Moore spoke he glanced significantly toward Evangeline, who caught the look, and thanked him with her eyes for his consideration.

The galley now lay motionless upon the water, the American cutter was lowered, and the crew at their oars awaited hoar the party, when Lord Hargrove, stepping forward toward

"Moorish captain, said, earnestly :

fai." "We have much to thank you for, sir: our lives and safe conduct out of an unfortunate scrape, and sincerely do trust that ere we part we may at least know to whom we are indebted," and Lord Hargrove extended his hand cordially to the Moor, who hesitated an instant, and then answered :

"Perhaps the supposed service rendered may be regretted when 'tis known who the instrument is."

"What! Surely *you* can not be otherwise than worthy of our warmest friendship!" exclaimed Evangeline, stepping forward, with surprise at what she had heard.

The Moor gazed an instant into the beautiful face, and the hot blood rushed to his very forehead, as he slightly bent his head; but, suddenly raising it with an air of pride, he answered firmly, yet quietly:

"Lady, I am he that is known as the 'Rais el Rais,' that is the Captain of Captains, and you now stand upon the deck of the fleet cruiser, corsair, if so you will it, that has won the reputation of the 'Broom of the Seas!'"

Had a thunderbolt suddenly fallen upon the deck of the vessel, the entire party could not have shown more astonishment, and for a moment, exclamations of surprise excepted, no word was spoken; but then Lord Hargrove said:

"What! *you* the man whose name has gone forth over the whole world as a fiend?—*you* he that is called the Captain of Captains, on account of his superior qualities as a sailor, and miraculous escapes from the navies of the world?"

"Ay, I am *Rais el Rais*, and yet, as Allah is my judge, I am not as black as I am painted; but time flies, and to save yonder noble vessel-of-war from destruction, in fact, to save your own lives, unless you are willing to remain on board the Broom of the Seas, until after the storm, you must hasten. Is all in readiness, sir?"

Starting at the words of the Moor, Howard May, who had been lost in thought, as he gazed upon the noble man before him, said, quickly:

"Yes, we are all ready. To you, corsair though you be, I owe an everlasting favor, that of my life, and the lives of my friends, and should the time ever come when I can reciprocate what you have done for me, remember I will do for a strange interest have I taken in you."

The young officer extended his hand; it was grasped by the Moor, and then, raising his turban in salute to a look from Evangeline, he let go the painter of the cutter, the oars were dropped, and the boat moved away from the side of the rover leaving the Captain of Captains, with Leilah Sakel leaning on his arm, standing on the deck, and gazing with a wistful look after them.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DARING PILOT.

ON the way back to the sloop of war, Howard May thought anxiously over the advice the corsair had personally given him to extricate his vessel from her dangerous vicinity as soon as possible; and then, turning to Lord Hargrove, he said :

"Did you ever meet a more remarkable man, my lord?"

"Never, Lieutenant May—never, sir; and, strange to say, I feel confident that in some way the Captain of Captains has ere this crossed my path."

"The same feeling have I—"

"And I," exclaimed Evangeline.

"That we have met before, I am confident; but when and where I am at a loss to recall," continued the lieutenant; and then, urging the men to tug hard at their oars, the cutter soon ran alongside the vessel, and immediately Howard May went to the cabin and reported to his commander all that had transpired.

"I would give this maimed arm to capture that corsair chief, May; but, under present circumstances, we are certainly tied down by the obligation; yet, another time we may meet. To the deck, and do all in your power to extricate the Bloodhound from her peril."

"I will; and yet, for a pilot, I must confess I rely in full faith upon the corsair. See, yonder you can see the cruiser coming down toward us, and slightly heading for the channel through which he said we would have to pass."

Without awaiting a reply, the lieutenant then hastened to the deck, and immediately gave orders that the guns should be securely lashed, the sails close furled, and every man at his post to meet the shock of the coming tempest.

Upon the deck still stood Lord Hargrove, Evangeline, and Hon. Edgar Seymour, watching and waiting for the result, while Mrs. Thornton had sought refuge from scenes of danger

within the seclusion of her state-room, after in vain striving to get Evangeline to accompany her.

The Bloodhound was now under storm-sails, close-reefed, three men at the wheel, and every man of her crew at his post, for one and all realized fully the danger by which they were surrounded.

Cool and commanding, Howard May paced the quarter-deck, glass in hand, and his restless eyes searching shore, sea, sky and the strange sail, which steadily bore down upon them with terrific speed, for yet did the swift and stanch galley carry a cloud of canvas that would have run under a larger ship.

"By Heaven, yon fellow is reckless. See how his craft staggers beneath her canvas!" exclaimed Lord Hargrove, to his friend, Mr. Seymour.

"Yet he can strip her to the decks in an instant, in case of need; and I believe he must have some motive in thus rushing down upon us, after all his kind professions," answered the lawyer.

"Hark! he is going to hail!" exclaimed Howard May, as the galley swept up into the wind but a hundred yards from the American's stern.

"Ahoy, the Bloodhound!" suddenly rung out in the clear tones of the chief—the same voice that had caused such a commotion when heard by the Berber horsemen.

"Ahoy, the galley!" answered Howard May, through his speaking-trumpet.

A moment's silence, and springing into the rigging the Captain of Captains cried, in English, and most distinctly:

"This is one of our African hurricanes sweeping down on us, and ere long it will be as dark as night, so I'll come aboard, if you will it, and pilot you to a harbor."

"A new feature. Why the fellow speaks English as well as I do!" said Mr. Seymour, while Lord Hargrove answered

"Yes; he is cousin german to the devil, I verily believe. But, May, do you intend to accept his services?"

"Assuredly, for I trust him," returned the lieutenant, and then, raising his voice, he called out:

"Who will take charge of your galley, if you leave it?"

"I have half a dozen aboard, competent pilots. Shall I come?"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

Ere Howard May could give the order to man a cutter to send after the rover, a boat shot forth from the galley's stern, and in it was the Captain of Captains, who, a moment after, sprung upon the American's decks, followed by the crew of his cutter, which was, with an agility and ease that surprised the beholders, also drawn aboard the vessel.

"I will have to claim room for my boat's crew also," said the Captain of Captains, as if in apology for bringing his men with him.

"Assuredly. Mr. Martin, see that the men are made comfortable; and you, sir, will you first enter the cabin and meet my commander, who, I regret to say, is laid up with a wounded arm?" said Lieutenant May.

"No, thank you; we must at once to work. Shall I take command?"

"Yes, sir," unhesitatingly replied Mr. May.

The corsair chief glanced his eye understandingly over the vessel, took in quickly the difference in the rig from his own, and then ordered certain changes made in the sails.

Dressed in different attire from that he had on when a horseman, he looked, if any thing, more commanding and handsome, while "armed to the teeth," he seemed fully capable of using the weapons he wore.

Ascending to the poop-deck, he had bowed low to Evangeline, and saluted Lord Hargrove and Mr. Seymour; after which, for some moments, he appeared as if unconscious of their existence, while he scanned the craft whose fate lay in his hands.

Gradually glancing out toward his own vessel, which, under full canvas, was flying landward, and then bestowing a searching look seaward, the Moor exclaimed:

"Never have I seen a more terrible tempest. Lady, this is no place for you, so I beg you to retire."

Evangeline colored crimson when she met the earnest eyes, but replied:

"I will remain here; there can be no more danger for me than for—my father."

"Then stand here by the wheel, for you will need shelter when yonder wall of water strikes the ship. Gentlemen, lash yourselves firmly—ha! you behold the tempest's forerunner!"

As the rover spoke the sea suddenly darkened as if in night, and the roar of waters was terrific; but nobly the good ship headed to meet her furious foes, sea and wind commingled in hatred against her.

All eyes sought the corsair bark, but the darkness hid her from view, and many believed, carrying the sail she did, she had gone down before the terrific onslaught of the hurricane; but a glance toward the immovable chief, and his face was firm and cool, with no shade of anxiety thereon.

Then were the heavens split in twain by flashes of livid lightning, which lit up the sea with the noonday brilliance of a cloudless sky, and nowhere could the galley be seen; she had disappeared either most mysteriously, or found a grave beneath the sea.

The same lurid flash of fire had displayed the fearful impetuosity and terror of the gale, the waves rising mountain high to have their crests borne off by the wind in showers of spray, the foaming cauldron of waters, the inky heavens, the racing storm-clouds, and above all rising a noise like unto armies contending in battle, while the winds howled mournfully and foreboding through the taut rigging of the vessel.

Like a mere plaything upon the waters, a mere speck upon the ocean, lay the Bloodhound, stripped bare of all canvas, her sharp bow pointing so as to meet the tempest, and her crew lashed to the rigging that they might not be torn away.

Upon the quarter-deck stood the English party, Lord Hargrove, Evangeline, and Mr. Seymour, all securely bound to the mizzen-mast, while near by, clinging to the after shrouds, was Howard May, speaking-trumpet in hand, and eyes watching every act of the corsair.

Next the wheel stood the corsair chief, his arms folded, and his supple body bending with the roll of the vessel, his face pale, stern, and cool.

Suddenly his lips part, and in the language of the Moor he shouts forth a few words, which are instantly answered by a sound of running feet, and immediately there appear

aft three of the Moorish seamen, the crew of the boat that had brought the Captain of Captains aboard.

"Mr. May, my men will relieve yours—they understand me better," said the chief, and the American bowed acquiescence.

Instantly the wheel was seized by the three Moors, the ship's quartermasters hastening to secure themselves against the shock of the tempest, and then rung out clear, startling, and loud, the command of the strange pilot:

"Down for your lives, and hold hard!"

As if rushing backward to escape the fury of the blow, the Bloodhound shrunk away, her bow descended lower and lower in the valley of waters, and then rising, as if in defiance, met the volumes that were poured upon her, faced the gale in all its fury, staggered, trembled, lurched, and then with a bound sprung above the raging elements, and swept over the sea, triumphantly conquering the first overwhelming tornado.

"Set storm-sails!" cried a voice above the storm's roar, and with a cheer the men sprung to their posts, and in an instant the ship was placed under sufficient canvas to steady her and give her steerage-way.

Like a statue stood the corsair chief, a wave of his hand indicating to his three men the direction he would steer, for no word did he utter to them; but when the vessel was apparently doing well and bounding forward upon a course known only to himself, he turned toward Evangeline and remarked:

"Lady, you stood the shock most nobly."

"I do not fear danger when I am in the presence of a brave man," returned Evangeline, as if involuntarily paying a compliment to the Moor.

A flash of lightning showed the dark face lighten with pleasure at the words; but, with only a bow of thanks, he turned once more to the management of the vessel, and addressed Howard May, who now stood by his side.

On, on, in the gloom, in the wild waves, and before the raging storm bounded the stanch vessel, each moment nearing the shore, which, bleak, inhospitable, and threatening, loomed up in gloomy blackness before them, presenting no

sign of succor to cheer them in their danger, but rather giving the idea of certain destruction.

Yet, apparently conscious of his power to save the vessel, the Captain of Captains stood erect and cool, his quick, restless eye searching sea, sky and shore, while an occasiona, wave of his hand to his crew indicated the way he would head, and changed the course of the ship.

But, as they sped on, the darkness increased, for, added to the blackness of the storm, night came on, shutting out from the eye everything around except the intense gloom, almost tangible.

Perfectly blinded by the inky blackness, unable to tell whither they were flying with mad speed, surrounded by mountain waves and a raging sea, bent down by a shrieking wind, and with a threatening coast ahead, few felt but that it was in the power of the daring pilot, corsair though he was, to save the ship, for his very attitude, his every act commanded entire confidence.

Again there came a glare of light, so dazzling, so searching that many closed their eyes, but the piercing look landward of the Rais wavered not, and for the first time he gave an order aloud to his Moorish helmsman.

Instantly the bows of the Bloodhound came up ; a moment she wallowed in the trough of the sea, and then, feeling the wind on the other quarter, the gallant vessel bounded on with the same mad speed as before.

"All hands take in sail!" suddenly cried the corsair chief, and every seamen sprung with alacrity to obey.

"Strip her close!" was the next order, and still rushing on with the velocity she had gained, the vessel darted into a narrow gorge, rounded a rocky point, and minding her helm, gracefully swept through a rock-bound gateway into a basin where the waters were placid, for there no shock of the tempest could reach.

"Let fall your anchors! Slowly men, slowly, and break her headway, or she'll run her nose into the walls of the basin," cried the corsair, and gradually the vessel's speed was checked until soon she became stationary, riding quietly at anchor.

"Mr. May your vessel is in a harbor, where storms can

never reach her; when you wish to get out, tow out with your boats."

"Again I offer you my hand in friendship. But, hold, you must meet the captain, and in one moment I'll be with you," answered Howard May; and, leaving the Rover, he disappeared in the cabin, to return a moment after and discover the strange and daring pilot had departed, having gotten into his cutter, and with his dusky crew rowed away in the darkness, ere one word could be said to detain him by Lord Hargrove or any of the under officers of the American vessel, for, with wonderful agility and skill his boat had been launched as soon as the lieutenant had gone to acquaint Captain Meredith with the manner in which the Bloodhound had been saved

CHAPTER VIII.

A WEIRD SCENE.

UPON entering the cabin, Lieutenant May found his commander suffering from severe mental and bodily anguish, for the known danger which his vessel was struggling through, his own inability to aid her, added to the pain he suffered, caused him to bitterly repine at his ill fortune, that held him down helplessly, when his services were so much needed.

"That daring pilot, then, was the corsair chief?" said Rupert Meredith, when he had listened with attentive interest to all his lieutenant had told him.

"Yes; and pirate though he be, I must confess I am strangely interested in him."

"Well, I must meet him, I suppose, and under the circumstances, extend the hospitality of the ship to him; so go up, Howard, and fetch him down," returned Captain Meredith, after arranging himself in a position to better receive his guest, a corsair chief, but one who had gallantly served him.

Ascending to the deck, glad to be able to entertain his strange guest as he deserved, Howard May uttered a curse--

sotto voce, for Evangeline was near by—when he learned he had so mysteriously departed, and without leaving a word for him, or receiving the thanks that would have been heaped upon him.

Acquainting his commander with the circumstance, Lieutenant May again sought the deck to urge Lord Hargrove and his party to seek rest, and to see that all was ship-shape for the night.

Suddenly he was startled by a cry forward, and the sound of splashing water broke on his ears, while immediately the dark outline of a large vessel broke on his astonished gaze.

"Forward there! Burn a blue light and let us see what kind of craft this is—to your guns, men, lively!" cried the lieutenant, and as the men obeyed, the bright glare of the blue light burst forth with a flood of brilliance that lit up the rocky walls of the basin rising far above the masts, and a hundred feet distant the graceful Broom of the Seas was gliding rapidly along, propelled by her fifty huge sweeps, and heading for the narrow gateway through which the Blood-hound had entered.

A perfect yell of delight burst from the Americans as they discovered the craft, which all had believed lost, intact in hull and rigging, and with her brave commander once more upon her deck, once more venturing forth to battle with the fury of the tempest, the roar of which was fearful even to listen to in that secluded harbor.

Near the helmsman, upon a dais, or raised deck, stood the Captain of Captains, firm and cool as ever, while leaning upon his arm, as if in perfect confidence, was Leilah Sakel.

It was a beautiful picture, one that looked, in the weird glare of the light, more spectral than real, for the tapering spars, the low, dark hull, fantastic and wild-looking crew, with her daring commander, and the beautiful being by his side, rendered it almost a phantom vessel and a specter crew.

Determined to prove his appreciation in some way for the kindnesses rendered him, Noel Meredith, who gazed upon the strange scene from the stern ports, called out:

"Ho the deck."

"Ay, ay, sir," quickly answered Howard May, appearing at the cabin entrance.

"Keep those blue lights burning ; run up the colors, and salute yon cruiser with thirteen guns."

"Ay, ay, sir ; ho, the guns ! Fire a salute of thirteen guns. Mr. Martin, let fly the Stars and Stripes," cried the delighted lieutenant, for it chimed in well with his humor to thus honor the daring pilot.

Immediately in response the ensign fluttered to the peak, and bursting forth, with a vehemence that startled tremendous echoes along the rocky walls of the basin, pealed forth the first gun, and then in quick succession followed the others, until their mingled roar resounded like rolling thunder.

In response to the salute, the corsair instantly displayed his colors, first at the head of the mizzenmast—the galley carried no topmasts, all of her spars being single sticks—the flag of Morocco, then at the main, a large black flag with a single eye, embroidered in gold, gleaming in the center, while at the fore flew an ensign of blue silk, embroidered in imitation of the waves of the sea, and bearing, floating thereon, a large crimson broom, as indicative of her name, "Broom of the Seas."

A cheer burst from all on board the American vessel as the colors floated out boldly, and ere the echo died away, the hull of the galley appeared to be on fire, as gun after gun belched forth a flaming reply, while the sweeps being quickly shipped, the broad lateen sails were spread, and still uttering from her brazen throats her words of farewell, she lay well up to the wind, and sailed out of the basin, to battle with the storm outside, the roar of which was terrific, while Heaven's artillery joined madly in the loud reverberations of the corsair's guns.

"Akin to Satan, or I'm an infidel !" exclaimed Lord Har-grove, lost in admiration at the magnificent scene they had just witnessed, and Mr. Martin called out :

"He fired one hundred guns, Mr. May."

"A princely reply to our salute, and showed three flags. Well, I know not what to make of the entire programme," returned the lieutenant, and then, as if impressed deeply with what they had witnessed, and visited, mayhap, by a feeling of superstition, a silence rested upon one and all, a silence that

was soon unbroken save by the roar of the tempest outside, for all but the night-watch sought rest in their state-rooms and hammocks, to dream over the strange incidents that had quickly crowded upon the past few hours.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MOORISH ESCORT.

THE morning broke, as is often the case after a storm, calm and beautiful, the bright sun rising in its glory and dispelling the clouds, leaving the sky clear and blue.

With the return of day, the superstitious feelings of the night fled partially away, but still whispered conversations were held among officers and men regarding the mysterious behavior of the cruiser and her strange commander.

With Evangeline Hargrove there remained a strange sensation, a feeling which she could not account for even to herself, a feeling of deep sympathy and intense interest in the Captain of Captains.

Crossing her life, running parallel with her pathway but a few short hours only, yet he had taken captive her maiden admiration, had stolen her fancy, and, in a measure, she felt, had the power to control her destiny.

Like a brilliant meteor, flashing, grand and a strange mystery, he had flashed before her, and, though gone, the dazzling remembrance remained, and for hours after she had retired to her state-room, she lay awake, and thought until sleep closed her tired eyelids, and she dreamed, and in her dreams saw the same vision, the same darkly handsome, fascinating face.

Upon ascending to the deck in the morning Evangeline started as she beheld, in close conversation with Howard May and her father, a man attired in the Moorish garb.

No, it was not the Rais, but a personage whom the reader has before met as the commander of the corsair stronghold

I refer to Casbin, the sheik of horsemen, who a few moments before had come out to the vessel in a small boat and begged to see the commander.

Casbin looked older, of course, than when, fifteen years before, he had met El-Sebah at the landing, after his combat with the Adventurer, but his face was still young, and bore the same noble expression of generosity, true courage, and kindness that had caused El-Sebah to make him his sheik of horsemen, his commander of the stronghold, a position he had given up at the death of his old master to become chief of the Berbers of the hills.

Dressed in the picturesque attire of those wild riders, armed and equipped with the weapons of his tribe, Casbin presented a striking appearance, and favorably impressed both Lieutenant May and Lord Hargrove, when he had, in obedience to a signal from them, been allowed to come on board.

As Evangeline approached the spot where the party stood in conversation, Casbin looked up, and catching her eye, bent low with a bow of adoration and respect, for though the wild tribes of that wilder land cared not to treat their own women with any great degree of esteem, they honored all females from European nations.

"My daughter, this worthy individual, who I find is a Berber sheik, brings letters to me from our friend of last night, and I wish you to aid me with your advice," said Lord Hargrove, placing in the hands of Evangeline a sweet-scented parchment with writing thereon.

Taking the parchment, the maiden read as follows:

"CRUISER BROOM OF THE SEAS,
"Off African Coast

* To Lord Hargrove :

"SIR—You expressed to me a desire to go into the interior of Morocco upon a mission of a personal, but important, nature, hence I inclose you a conduct for the safe passage of yourself and friends.

"The bearer, Casbin, is a sheik of the Berbers, and will see that you are not molested while you remain upon the soil of the Moor. You can rely wholly upon him, for his good faith will be vouched for by

"ALVAH,
"Otherwise known as *Rais el Rais.*"

"This is indeed noble of him, dear father; but can I see the pass?"

Without a word the nobleman handed her another parchment upon which was written a few lines in the Moorish characters, and therefore wholly unintelligible to the maiden; but, seeing her smile of disappointment, Casbin, in tolerable Spanish, translated it, and 'twas discovered to be a permit for Lord Hargrove and friends to pass unmolested through Morocco, by order of the Captain of Captains.

Mr. Seymour approaching, it was now determined that the party should land, and under the guidance of Casbin, and protection of Howard May and a dozen marines, take up their march for the town near by, while the Bloodhound, which needed some few repairs, was to remain in the basin until the return of her lieutenant.

Casbin was therefore invited to remain on board of the ship, but declining, promised to meet them at a point of land he directed to, and at once took his departure, going, as he had come, alone, in a small craft, light and fragile, but which he managed with grace and skill.

"The plot thickens, for certainly I can find no motive in the man, who has won the name of Captain of Captains, bestowing upon us such marked kindness," remarked Mr. Seymour, as the boat of the Moor disappeared in a break in the wall of the basin.

"True; his ways are most mysterious; but the object that brought me to Morocco is of such importance that I am determined to leave no stone unturned to gain the end I seek," answered Lord Hargrove; and the party then adjourned to the cabin to breakfast, where, still reclining upon a lounge, Noel Meredith joined them, and together they discussed, over and over again, the character of the strange man that had so opportunely crossed their path.

The party landing, upon arriving at the designated spot, found Casbin awaiting them with a number of good horses well equipped, and mounting, they set forth upon their journey, which the guide said would be some ten miles through the mountains.

A guard of Berber horsemen, some twenty wild-looking, well-mounted fellows, with Casbin at their head, led the way.

then came Howard May, and Evangeline, and Mrs. Thornton, riding together, Lord Hargrove and Mr. Seymour riding side by side, and the dozen marines from the Bloodhound's crew bringing up the rear.

Over a wild country their way ran, now upon the side of a high mountain, then along a valley, and again over a sterile plain, bordered here and there with growths of stunted shrubs, from which peeped forth hundreds of the same wild-looking race as composed their guides and escort.

Soon the vista opened upon them, and the domes and minarets of a considerable town burst upon their view, the same, in fact, that had been seen from the ocean, and for which they had started the day before.

As they approached, hundreds of the people flocked to the town walls to see the cavalcade, but a few words from Casbin, now and then addressed to the noisy crowd, protected the Christians from insult, while a short parley of the sheik with the kaid of the gates gained for them a ready admission, where a considerably-dilapidated *caravanserai*, or hotel, was found for the travelers, who were, under the directions of Casbin, made as comfortable as possible.

Upon inquiry, Lord Hargrove discovered that his affairs would detain him some weeks in the town, so he determined to allow Howard May to depart with his escort, and request Captain Meredith to send word that his yacht, which would soon be ready for sea, should come to the basin where the Bloodhound then was, and await his pleasure.

As the American vessel intended cruising along the coast for some time, and would put into the seaport to which the yacht had been sent for repairs, it would be an easy matter to let her sailing-master know where to find Lord Hargrove thus his duty toward his guests being at an end, the young lieutenant, with many assurances of friendship upon both sides, bade farewell, and with his men, set forth, once more under the guidance of Casbin, and without adventure arrived once more safely on board his ship.

To his surprise, Noel Meredith did not appear to show the interest in the safety of Evangeline, as Howard had expected — for he had believed that his commander was certainly in love with the English beauty, who, since his wound had con-

fined him to the cabin, had been untiring in her attentions to the handsome and gallant American—so much so, in fact, that she appeared herself to be half in love with the man who had broken his arm in her service.

But a question abruptly put by Noel, placed Howard May upon the right track, as regarded the current of his commander's thoughts.

"You do not know in what relation she stands to the corsair chief?" he asked.

"Why, she only thanked him for what he had done, and—"

"Nonsense, you are all wrong. Who was that angel who stood beside the Rais upon the galley's deck?"

"Ah, I see; you refer to Leilah Sakel, the Moorish maiden!"

"Yes, I saw her as distinctly as could be, and I really did not believe that earth held such an angel—"

"You've got it bad," muttered Howard May, with a pang of jealousy.

"Got what bad, Howard?"

"I say, your arm is not so bad, that is, it does not pain you as much as—"

"As it did—no, thank you, it is greatly improved; but, Howard, tell me, was that beautiful creature the wife of the corsair?"

"That none of us know; he called her Leliah Sakel, and furthermore the deponent sayeth not."

"Leilah Sakel—a strange but beautiful name; do you know, Howard, if I could win that girl, that is, if she loved no other, I would marry her, even though she were a pirate's daughter, for I know such an angel form and face must possess a pure and beautiful heart."

"Well, I must go on deck. I hope you will soon be up again, captain," answered Howard, for, in love with the Moorish maiden himself, he did not like to hear her thus spoken of by another man, even though that man was his commander.

CHAPTER X.

A DEEP-LAID SCHEME.

As the reader has doubtless surmised, the galley had departed at once for the basin, after her commander had gone aboard the American vessel, and there the Rais had found her upon leaving the decks of the Bloodhound.

Being anxious to continue on in an enterprise he had on hand, and which had been temporarily delayed by meeting with the Americans, the Rais determined to depart at once from the basin, and as soon as he boarded his own vessel, gave orders to get under way, with the result already known.

Standing directly out to sea, as if in defiance of the raging storm, the Broom of the Seas headed up the coast, her daring commander on her deck, and coolly watching every move of the fleet and stanch vessel, until at length the clouds broke away, the storm decreased, and there was a promise of pleasant weather on the morrow; then, exhausted by his exertions, he sought his cabin for rest.

The hours crept on apace, and at length the Rais was startled from his slumbers by a cry of "Sail, ho!" on deck, and in a few moments he had ascended and was busily scanning the strange craft through his glass.

"What do you make her out, El Rais?" asked the *Bash Sora Rais*, or first officer, of his commander.

"It is the cruiser of El Dakotek—signal him to stand down toward us, for I have orders for him."

In answer to the signal displayed from the galley, the strange sail, a vessel well-armed and equipped, but not so large or formidable as the Broom of the Seas, changed her course and in a few moments rounded to under the stern of the corsair, while she at the same time ran up the colors of Morocco and the black flag with the eye of gold, saluting them with seven guns.

The galley instantly returned the salute, and then raising his voice, the Rais el Rais, cried:

"El Dakotek, ahoy!"

"Ay, ay, Rais," answered a burly Moorish officer from the cruiser

"I would have you know that an American vessel of war, now anchored in the Secret Basin, must not be harmed by any of my fleet; also, an English pleasure-yacht, now on the coast, must be protected."

"Ay, ay, Rais, By the beard of my grandfather, you shall be obeyed."

"It is well; see that I am not disobeyed, and, mind you, Dakotek, inform each officer of my squadron whom you may fall in with, of my wishes."

"Ay, ay, oh Rais el Rais."

The two galleys then parted, the Broom of the Seas continuing her course on up the coast, and the cruiser of Dakotek standing off in a different direction, while her burly commander thoughtfully paced his deck and meditated upon the strange freak of his commander, for the Captain of Captains was admiral of the corsair squadron, to shun an American vessel and protect an English pleasure-yacht.

"I must look to this, and, by Allah, if there are reasons for his orders I'll know them!" murmured the Moor, and he immediately gave directions that his vessel should be put on a course for the Secret Basin, as the harbor was known where the Bloodhound then lay at anchor.

Leaving the sea for awhile, I will now beg the reader to return with me to the town where Lord Hargrove and his party were domesticated under the supervision of Casbin.

The circumstances that had caused the English nobleman to visit the inhospitable—to strangers—land of Morocco, were to seek out some trace of a lost relative, who many years before, had been last heard from in the land of the Moor.

But though the nobleman spent his money freely, and endeavored all in his power to obtain some clew to the lost one, he met only with discouragement, and at every point was thwarted by the scheming of the Moors, who were ever jealous of their Christian visitors.

Nor were they without dangers surrounding them in the land, for it soon became whispered around that Evangeline was the most beautiful of her sex, and this had caused several

of the sultan's under-officers to determine to, in some way, gain possession of the English beauty, and make her an inmate of their harem.

Among the Moors thus determining was the Kaid of the Gates, who had beheld with delight and surprise the beauty of Evangeline, as Casbin had led them into the walls of the town, and being a scheming villain and a great favorite with the sultan, Selim Sekah determined, be the result what it may, he would gain possession of the maiden.

To seize her openly he dare not, for fear of it coming to the ears of his sovereign, and thereby being ordered to bring her before his presence; and then a certain fear of the Rais el Rais restrained him, for Casbin had particularly informed him that the Christians were under the protection of the famous rover, who was too well known and feared to allow the kaid to believe he could openly defy him.

Therefore the wily Selim Sekah determined to plot for the success of his plans, and knowing well the object of the visit of the English, he used it to advance his scheme by informing Lord Hargrove that he had heard that in a mountain tribe there lived a man, an Englishman, who years before had come to Morocco, and that if he desired to visit the encampment, he would escort him with a body-guard.

Determined to allow nothing to stand in the way of his search, and believing in the faith of an officer occupying so high a position as the Kaid of the Gates, Lord Hargrove at once accepted the proposition of the wily man, although he liked not his face, and the following morning the four Christians set forth on the way to the home of the mountain tribe.

Purposely conducting them slowly, it was nightfall ere they had gone many miles, and then the kaid ordered an encampment in the shelter of an old ruin, and made the Christians as comfortable as possible, while in tolerable Spanish he entertained them with legends of his native land.

It was a lovely moonlight night, and the whole land was lit up with silvery radiance, while the crumbling ruins, picturesque groups of the Moorish guard, and the broken accent of the kaid added a peculiarly fascinating interest to the scene, an interest that impressed the Christians most strangely with all around them, and caused Evangeline to believe that

she was living in a land of enchantment, or a creature of centuries agone.

So wrapped were all in the low voice of the Moor and the surrounding beauties of the night, that none noticed a horseman's approach until he suddenly drew rein in their midst, and, skillfully stooping in the saddle, raised Evangeline quickly in his arms ere she was aware of his presence.

A shriek, a word in the Moorish tongue to his steed, a clatter of hoofs, and cries of distress from Lord Hargrove, Mrs. Thornton, and Mr. Seymour, and the daring horseman had disappeared, bearing with him poor Evangeline.

"To horse, to horse!" yelled the kaid, and instantly he darted forward toward where his horse stood, and in an instant was mounted and in hot pursuit, while he called to half a dozen of his best horsemen to follow.

"Save my child, my poor Evangeline, and I will enrich you!" cried the grief-stricken father, who, with Mr. Seymour, was powerless to render any assistance, and in their hearts hope arose as they saw the rapid flight of Selim Sekah, whom now they wholly trusted.

Away darted the Moor for a short distance, and then drawing rein, he awaited the coming of the horsemen whom he had instructed to follow him, and upon their arrival ordered them to divide into two parties, and press forward in all haste.

Away darted the Moors, and then Selim Sekah turned abruptly into a path leading up the mountain-side, and rode on as rapidly as the rough nature of the road would permit, for the distance of half a mile, when he suddenly came upon a shelf of the hill whereon was crumbling to decay one of those old ruins so often met with in Morocco.

Placing his hands to his lips he gave a low call, not unlike the cooing of a dove, and immediately there came from the shadow of the ruin a tall and powerful Moor, bearing in his arms a heavy burden, a burden that proved to be the insensible form of Evangeline Hargrove.

"She is unconscious," said the kaid, speaking abruptly in the Moorish tongue.

"Yes, oh, kaid, and has been so since I first held her in my arms."

"It is nothing; I will soon restore her, and then, Subah, continue on with her to thy mountain home, and there in a few days I will come and seek her; but now I must return to the Christian dogs and tell them that the maid is forever lost to them. Ha! this was a lucky thought of mine; but wait she recovers."

Slowly the beautiful eyes opened and mellowed in the moonlight, the bosom heaved painfully, a sigh escaped the lips, and then, with a bound, Evangeline sprung to her feet, as she saw the black face of Selim Sekah hovering over her.

"Oh, God, where am I? Ha! I see all now. I was stolen away, and you have rescued me?" she exclaimed, a light of kindness coming into her face.

"You were seized by El Subah, to become the wife of Selim Sekah, the Kaid of the Gates," answered the Moor, quickly.

"Then, indeed, am I lost—oh, God! oh, God! help thou the defenseless."

"Stain not the ears of the True Believers with the name of thy false God, or, by Allah, 'twill be the worst for you. Here, Subah, bear her away, and if she cries forth, clasp thy sash around her mouth," angrily answered the kaid, and springing upon his steed, he cried out:

"Remember, within three days I'll be in thy mountain home."

Away darted the wicked kaid, and Evangeline was left alone and helpless with El Subah, the sheik of a tribe of Berbers.

CHAPTER XI.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

With despair at her heart Evangeline gave herself up as utterly lost, for where could she look for aid, from whence could assistance come to her, there alone with an evil Moor, on that lonely mountain?

"Come," said the Moor, suddenly, as the sound of the re-

treating hoof-all died away, and El Subah turned toward the maiden, who gazed into his face, hoping against hope that some kindness might rest there.

The face was stern, daring, and good-looking, the form massive and powerful, but though El Subah—the Lion—had won his name from his indomitable courage and skill as a horseman and warrior, there was naught in the bold countenance to cause the maiden to hope that she could persuade him to convey her back to her friends.

"Come!" and again the deep tones broke the stillness, while the Moor called in a higher key to his horse, which immediately trotted forth from the shadow of the ruin.

"Oh, have mercy, have mercy upon me!" exclaimed the poor girl, but not understanding her, a grim smile lit up the face of El Subah, as he motioned to her to approach that he might place her behind his saddle.

One glance around, a glance of terror, and with clasped hands the maiden bowed her head in despair.

"Hold!"

Like a startled bird El Subah turned upon the defensive, as the clear order, spoken in the Moorish tongue, cut upon his ear, and with a cry of hope Evangeline turned also to behold standing near them a tall figure muffled in a white *djellabeah*, with the hood covering his face completely.

"Who and what are you?" asked El Subah, drawing his cimeter and facing the new-comer.

"What would you with that maiden, dog of a burnt grandfather?" asked the stranger, in deep, stern tones.

"She is the property of Selim Sekah, Kaid of the Gates, and wouldst thou have her, thy blade must beat down that of El Subah," answered the Moor, in a proud tone.

"Ha! ha! wouldst the sword of even El Subah find its master?" laughed the stranger, and his manner and words so infuriated the Moor that he uttered a cry of rage, and with drawn weapon sprung upon him.

As quick as thought there gleamed from beneath the fold of the *djellabeah* a glittering blade which crossed that of El Subah with a terrible clash, and instantly the contestants were engaged in a hot encounter.

"Know thou, cursed of Allah, thy sword has met that of

the Lion of the Hills :" hissed the Moor, as, with terrible energy, he pressed his antagonist, who slowly gave ground before him, causing Evangeline to believe that the hope that had come to her must fade away.

" And know thou, thou doubly accursed of Christ and Mohammed, thy weapon is crossed by that of *Alvah Amazerg !*"

" *Bismillah ! Bismillah !*" exclaimed the Moor, darting back, and half-lowering his sword, while an expression of terror crossed his face.

" In the name of God be it then !" cried the stranger, and his gleaming cimeter cut swiftly through the air and clove through and through the skull of the Moor, who sunk to the earth with a groan.

Hastily wiping the stain from the blade, the stranger turned, and beheld Evangeline, with frightened face and staring eyes, standing near, and stepping forward he said, in English :

" Lady, thank God I have saved you from an awful fate—"

" What ! *you* here ?—you, the Captain of Captains ?" cried Evangeline, with joy in her tones.

The hood of the *djellabeah* was thrown back, and the handsome, splendid face of the rover stood revealed.

" Yes, lady, I am at sea, Rais el Rais ; but here, among the Berber hills, I am a sheik, and am known as *Alvah Amazerg*," said the corsair, quietly.

" It was terrible to slay him thus—oh, it was terrible !"

" Yet a worse fate would have been thine, lady."

Evangeline shuddered, but said quickly :

" Yes, he would have borne me away."

" To become the inmate of a harem. El Subah was a great sheik, but the love of gold betrayed him into following the advice of Selim Sekali, and he has met a just fate."

" But I believed you at sea, miles and miles away," interrupted Evangeline, while she gazed with a strange look into the face of the man before her.

" And so I was ; but returning to my stronghold, I determined to seek you out in the town and see if I could be of assistance to you, for well I know the danger of a Christian woman in this land of Moors. I was but now on my way,

when hearing the approach of hoofs, I sought shelter in your ruin. Allah be praised; my coming was so opportune."

Evangeline hesitated but a moment, and then held forth both hands and clasped those of the Rais, while she said, softly :

" Again you have served me—"

" No thanks, lady. But come, mount behind me, and I will conduct you to your friends," answered the Rais, and in a few words learning that Lord Hargrove and his party were near, the Captain of Captains aided Evangeline to mount, and at once set forth in search of the ruin, where they soon after arrived and were received with delight by the nobleman and his grief-stricken friends, and with consternation by the Kaid of the Gates, who had returned a few moments before and reported his inability to recapture the maiden.

With his face concealed, the Rais el Rais was yet unknown to the party, and in an angry manner Selim Sekah stepped forward, determined, now that it was known how treacherous he was, that he would at once assert his claim to the maiden.

" Who is it that has thus dared to cross the path of the great Kaid of the Gates ?" he asked in an insulting and pompous manner, as he stepped forward and confronted the strange companion of Evangeline.

The Rais said nothing, but quietly threw back his hood and let the bright moonlight fall full upon his noble face.

Instantly the countenance and manner of the arrogant kaid changed, his eyes drooped, and bowing low, he cried :

" Mercy, oh mighty Sidi ! Mercy show to thy servant, ch thou Skimmer of the Seas, and free chief of the Berbers !"

" Get thee hence, Selim Sekah ! Quickly begone, or I'll give thy body as food to the birds of the air. Begone, you and your hirelings, or may the curses of Mohammed rest on me, if I do not serve you as I have El Subah."

The Rais el Rais spoke sternly and with earnestness, and well knowing how mighty was his power, the false kaid quickly mounted his steed, and calling to his men to follow him, sped away over the plains until he was lost from sight.

Then in a few words the Rais made known the circumstances attending his timely arrival upon the scene, and one and all overwhelmed him with thanks.

"But you must not linger here, for although temporarily defeated, the kaid possesses wonderful influence with the sultan, and upon some pretense or other will attempt your capture; so again you must become my guests, but not as before, upon the Broom of the Seas, but in my stronghold in the mountains."

The Rais spoke in a manner that admitted of no other alternative than to acquiesce, and after a short consultation together, the horses were saddled, and the party of Christians, under the guidance of the chief, took up their march for the Berbers' mountain home.

Guided by the light of the moon, they continued their way for hours, until at length, just as the east became rosy in welcome to the coming sun, they arrived upon the coast of the small bay, where years before the galley of El-Sebah had dropped anchor after her engagement with the American bark.

Up the steep ascent of the hill the Rais led the way, the view each moment becoming grander and grander, with level plains, ranges of hills, the sparkling waters of the bay, with the Broom of the Seas nestling on its bosom, and beyond, the broad ocean dotted here and there with a white sail.

At length the first fortification was reached, and groups of idlers gathered along the path to gaze upon the Christians, but the presence of the Rais always protected them from insult, and soon the strange sight of the villa burst upon their astonished vision, for in that wild land of Morocco none had anticipated beholding an English-looking villa, surrounded and filled with every luxury.

"Here is my land home, Lord Hargrove, and you and all are welcome as my guests," exclaimed the Rais, dismounting and aiding Evangeline to the ground, while Mr. Seymour assisted Mrs. Thornton.

Hardly had the entire party dismounted, when suddenly Leilah Sakel bounded from the house, and to one and all gave a most cordial but surprised welcome; but though receiving her greeting with kindness, Evangeline could not but feel a bitter pang of jealousy, for already had she begun to feel an interest, akin to pure love, for the favored Captain of Captains.

Without ostentation, and with gentle hospitality, the Rais

ushered his guests into the house, and soon made them most comfortable in their new quarters, and warmly did they congratulate themselves upon their adventure turning out so fortunately for all concerned, and in the delightful home where they found themselves, almost forgot that they were the guests of a corsair, and in the land of Morocco.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ATTACK.

TOWARD the afternoon of the second day, the eyes of the noble party were gladdened by a distant view of their yacht, which, having been fully refitted, was shaping her course down the coast toward the rendezvous at the secret basin.

Afar off on the ocean she was descried and recognized by Lord Hargrove, and upon his discovery that it was his vessel his glad exclamation brought out upon the veranda, where he was sitting, his own immediate party, and the Captain of Captains, who had just returned from a tour of inspection around his fortress.

"I will at once dispatch a messenger to the basin, and have her ordered here, my lord," said the Rais.

"Indeed it would be another task upon your kindness; but, truly speaking, I would be glad to have my yacht where I could once more tread her decks in safety."

"Then I will immediately see that word is sent to her—ha! what have we here?" exclaimed the Rais, as, upon turning, he discovered a large body of horsemen coming across the plains, and heading in the direction of the stronghold.

With renewed fear Lord Hargrove and his friends also saw the large cavalcade, and fearing a hostile mission, they looked with dread at the apparently small force at the command of the rover.

"Would that we were well out of this land of trials and tribulations," murmured Mrs. Thornton, as before her visior new dangers were rapidly rising.

"No ~~sor~~, lady; ere very many weeks I trust the green shores of old England will meet your view," returned the rover, and then having summoned several under officers, and given them earnest directions, he turned his gaze once more upon the advancing horsemen, which were now little more than a mile distant and coming on at a rapid pace.

"As I expected, Selim Sekah heads the cavalcade. Now it rests between the sultan and myself," muttered El Rais, and calling to his friends to follow, he led the way adown the sloping hillside until he came to a position that contained a view of the entire plain, dotted, as it was, with a thousand wild horsemen.

Not long had the party to await there, as the cavalcade came to a halt, and from their midst rode two horsemen, who directed their steeds up the steep pathway toward the fortress, at the same time bearing in their hands white banners as tokens of a peaceful mission.

"I will not be deceived by those peaceful bannerets, oh, Kaid Selim," murmured El Rais, as he discovered that his enemy was one of the horsemen who, upon approaching to within a hundred feet of the spot occupied by the Captain of Captains, came to a halt, as if awaiting an invitation to come on.

"What would you, Kaid Selim, servant of his august majesty, the sultan, to whom Allah give long life?" called out the Rais el Rais, in a loud tone.

"I would, oh mighty eagle of the mysterious deep, before whom the flags of the world are ever fleeing, that thou wouldest allow thy unworthy servant to place before thee orders from the great Sidi, our master, whom Allah preserve forevermore," answered the kaid, in a pompous voice.

"The orders of the sultan, whom Allah hold ever in the hollow of his hand, are to be heeded. Advance, and let me know them!"

Upon this invitation the kaid and his companion, whom the Rais recognized as the sultan's chief of cavalry, rode forward, and dismounting, held forth to the rover a small parchment, sealed with the signet of the great Sidi.

Breaking the seal, the Rais el Rais read aloud, translating into English for the benefit of his guests, as follows:

"Alvah Amazer," the Sheik of the Free, and Rais el Rais, of the Broom of the Seas, will immediately deliver into the hands of our worthy Kaid Selim Sekah, the Christian captives now held in his possession, and in defense of whom he laid low in death the great El Subah of the mountain tribes.

"This by order of his majesty

"THE SULTAN."

"Hark ye, kaid! Go back forthwith to your master, the sultan, and tell him that the Captain of Captains and chief of the Amazergs has no Christian captives in his possession—that these Christians now here are not captives, but my guests, whom distinctly I refuse to deliver up."

The corsair spoke with determination, and his eyes flashed with a threatening light; but, as he was anxious to regain possession of Evangeline at all hazards, the wily kaid answered :

"In case you refuse to give up the captives, I am authorized to take them by force."

"Is this so? Has the sultan given this power into the hands of this veriest slave? Speak, Abdallah, it is you whom I address!" earnestly said the Rais, as he turned to the companion of the kaid.

"It is true, mighty captain, for into my ears were poured the order to take one thousand horsemen and tear from your grasp those whom the kaid would have," answered the officer.

"Then, know that had you ten times your present force I would not give them up. Begone! and, mind you, in haste, or the children of the Amazerg will stain their swords in your vile blood."

The Rais was now thoroughly aroused; the lion in his nature was up, and his eyes glared with a daring, terrible fire, and feeling their dangers, the two envoys of the sultan turned and rode rapidly away.

"Now let me beg of you to seek yonder veranda, and from there you can be witnesses of the battle that soon will be fought," said the Rais.

"And whither will you go?" asked Evangeline, with more feeling in her tone than she cared to display.

"I will lead my men, lady—"

"Your men, chief? Why, I fear me those horsemen will

"sweep your handful of followers from the face of the earth," said Mr. Seymour, while Lord Hargrove answered quickly:

"Hold, Seymour; we know not the resources of our kind host; but, let us also battle against our foes."

"No, my lord, it were better that you remained with the ladies. Here, Leilah Sakel, escort our friends back to the mansion," and, half-raising his jewel-bespangled turban, the Rais mounted his steed, which was at that moment brought for him, and rode rapidly adown the hillside, followed by but half a hundred men, while, under the guidance of the beautiful Moorish maiden, the party of Christians sought a prominent position from whence a good view could be obtained of the broad plain at their feet, and the thousand horsemen who were forming in line of battle under the leadership of Abdallah and the kaid.

"This is terrible, and yet 'tis a grand sight, a battle of horsemen," said Evangeline, as, with eyes resting upon one prominent figure, she gazed almost spell-bound upon the stirring scene before her.

"Terrible, indeed, my daughter, and may the God of battles protect our brave defender!" exclaimed Lord Hargrove, and then he continued hastily:

"But, that is madness. See! he is boldly riding forth to meet those overwhelming numbers!"

The surprise of all was manifest at the strange maneuver of the Rais, who, having reached nearly to the level plain, suddenly formed his half a hundred horsemen in line of battle, and slowly moved forward, as if to give battle.

With shouts of derision and loud cries of defiance, the sultan's horsemen suddenly began to move, and then, led on by their leader, Abdallah, and Kaid Selim, they bore down upon the small force, as if in the anticipation of an easy victory.

On they came, yelling like demons, and urging their horses in a mad race, until but a hundred yards divided them from the small force of the Rais, who, wholly undaunted, awaited the shock.

But then, just as Evangeline closed her eyes to shut out the terrible sight, and already pictured in her mind the torn and bleeding form of the Rais, the rover suddenly raised his hand,

and from the hill-side burst forth a livid line of flame; a crashing report followed, and the iron hail, hurled from a number of ambushed guns, tore shrieking into the foremost ranks of horsemen, sending many of them to the earth, while with a yell that pierced far and wide, and echoed against the hills, hundreds of brave mountaineers sprung, as if by magic, from every cliff and crevice in the hill side, and with rapid rush bore down upon the squadrons of the sultan, whose mad career was instantly checked.

"At them, my brave children of the Amazerg!" cried the ringing voice of the Captain of Captains, who, with his horsemen, now darted forward into the midst of their foes, while still the brave followers of the Rais pressed on, each moment increasing in number as though they came up from the earth, and with wild halloos hurled themselves upon their enemies, who turned and fled in dire dismay, leaving Abdallah and Selim Sekah dead upon the field, each slain in a personal encounter with the dreaded rover.

One loud, exultant shout of joy went up from the ensanguined field, and then as the dust and smoke of battle floated away, unvailing the scene to the view of the party of Christians, what was their surprise to find that the dead and dying alone dotted the plain; the hundreds of brave followers who had fought for the Rais had disappeared as mysteriously as they had come, for nowhere could they be seen.

Far off upon the plain were the flying horsemen of the sultan, and upon the scene of combat a few men were busy looking to the comfort of the wounded, and quickly burying the dead; but where had gone the bold combatants?

Echo answered, "Where!"

But as the noble party gazed they descried the approach of the Captain of Captains and his small escort, returning up the steep pathway, while by his side rode Casbin, whom they remembered as their guide into the interior, and eagerly one and all pressed forward to greet and welcome the victor, upon whose face rested no shadow of the scene in which he had just participated.

"My brother! my brother! Allah has heard my prayer and saved your precious life," cried Leilah Sakel, throwing herself upon the broad bosom of the corsair.

"*Her brother!* God, I thank Thee!" exclaimed Evangeline, as she also pressed forward, and with the others gave her warm congratulations at the victorious termination of the battle, while Mr. Seymour asked:

"Do you deal in magic, Rais, that you can summon to your aid a thousand men at a call?"

"No; I had feared an armed visit from the kaid, and hence good Casbin and his bold men were all in position awaiting his coming since last night; but, pardon me if I make a suggestion—for by this act I have placed myself at war with the sultan, or at least until his anger cools off, which will be when I return from a cruise with several valuable prizes to allay his wrath. I can not leave you here during my absence, and therefore will see you safely to sea in your yacht, after which it would be best for you to leave this coast for at least a few months."

"I agree with you, sir, perfectly, and thank you for your suggestion; but when will the yacht arrive?" asked Lord Hargrove.

"By midnight."

"Then we will at once commence preparations for our departure," returned the nobleman; and the yacht arriving at the appointed hour, farewells were said, with great sadness to at least two hearts, and away the fleet little vessel sped from the inhospitable coast, bearing upon her decks Leilah Sakel, who, having learned to love the beautiful English maiden with all her heart, had persuaded the Rais to allow her to accompany the yacht as far as the outer arms of the bay, and return in her own little sail-boat, which, with its crew of two men, was towing behind the yacht.

At length tearful adieux were said between the two maidens, the yacht was hove to, and entering her little craft, which danced gracefully over the moonlit waters, Leilah Sakel took the tiller and turned the sharp prow of her boat harborward, while the fleet English vessel once more renewed her course to the open sea, leaving far astern the frail craft and its bold girl commander. The Moorish maiden was most expert in the management of both tiller and sails, and felt no fear but that she could return to the shelter of the corsairs' bay.

CHAPTER XIII.

ADRIFT AT SEA.

OFTEN before, during her life, had Leilah Sakel stood still further out from the haven in her frail craft than on this occasion, when she escorted the yacht out of the harbor, and therefore she well knew each channel of the coast, and every point and light on shore.

Seated at the helm, the maiden was lost in thought, and took little heed of her course, until half an hour had passed, and then an exclamation from one of the two young Moors who formed her crew recalled her to a consciousness of her position.

"Well, what is it, Salee?" she asked.

"We have headed in wrong, oh pearl of the heart of El Rais, and the tide is bearing us seaward," answered the Moor, with some alarm in his voice.

"Too true—too true. Take to the oars, both of you, and pull for your lives!" cried Leilah Sakel, now thoroughly aroused to the danger she was in, and putting the boat about, she once more headed inland, and in such a way as to endeavor to round a long point of rocks, a mile or more away, where the waves broke in silvery spray and anger.

In vain, however, was the exertion of the oarsmen and the skill of Leilah Sakel, in the endeavor to force her boat against a head wind and rushing tide, for swiftly the frail craft was borne further and further away from the land; one by one the lights on shore disappeared, and then the long, dark line, broken by its hills, soon faded from view, and but a wilderness of water surrounded them.

In an agony of grief the poor maiden cast herself down in the stern-sheets and wept, while her Moorish companions, after lowering the sail, sat moodily in the bow, bemoaning the fate they believed would be theirs.

Thus an hour or more passed, and raising her head, Leilah Sakel turned her tear-dimmed eyes upon the expanse of wa-

ters around her, and her heart sunk as nowhere did they rest upon the longed-for land.

But joy! Suddenly a sail came before her vision—a large vessel, standing directly down toward the little boat, and in half an hour more the maiden recognized it as the American craft she had last seen the night El Rais had piloted her in the storm.

On came the swift Bloodhound, heading directly for the small boat, which had long before been descried from the decks of the American, and rounding to, a manly voice hailed, in Spanish :

" Ahoy, the boat!"

" Ahoy, the Bloodhound!" floated the silvery reply, in English, and at the sound, one long, loud cheer broke from the brave seamen, for doubly glad were they to know that they had saved a woman.

" Ha, Howard, that is the sweetest voice I ever heard; but what can it mean?

" By Heaven, I believe 'tis Leilah Sakel," exclaimed Captain Noel Meredith, who, though pale and weak, had sufficiently recovered to resume command of his vessel.

" But what is the matter with the fellow? Has my executive officer gone mad?" he continued, as he saw Howard May suddenly cut a few capers around the third cutter, and, with but two of the seamen, lower it into the ocean and row away in the direction of the drifting boat.

A few moments more and Leilah Sakel and her two Moors stood upon the deck of the Bloodhound, where the maiden was warmly welcomed by her commander, and escorted with gallantry to the cabin.

" Lady, I know not the lucky circumstance that has thus made you my guest; but rest assured that this ship and all it contains are at your orders as long as you will honor us with your presence," said Noel Meredith, bowing low before the maiden, who stood, as though in a dream, gazing into his strangely handsome face, with admiration, wonder, and a puzzled look, hard to solve.

" I thank you, sir; but not long will I impose upon your goodness, if you will kindly land me near the harbor of my brother's stronghold," answered the maiden, softly.

"Your brother! The famous rover, the Captain of Captains, is, then, your brother, lady?" said Captain Meredith, with undisguised surprise and pleasure.

"Yes, Alvah Amazerg, the Rais el Rais, is my brother."

"Thank God!"

"Señor?"

"I say, thank God it has been in my power to save you; but pardon my curiosity, kind lady, and tell me why it is I find you adrift at sea?"

Leilah Sakel then informed Captain Meredith of the circumstances, with which the reader is already acquainted, and after promising her that ere long she should be returned to the arms of her brother, he left the cabin and sought the deck, to give orders for the vessel to be put away for the harbor of the corsairs.

Pacing to and fro was Howard May, the pangs of jealousy eating deep into his soul; but, bringing his good sense to mind, he controlled the bitterness that was surging in his heart, and greeted his commander with a smile, as he asked about the fair waif they had rescued from the waves.

In a few words Noel Meredith explained to his lieutenant why it was that Leilah Sakel had been thus exposed to the mercy of the sea, and the two officers held a consultation as to the best course to be pursued.

"Sail, ho!" suddenly came the cry from the masthead, and glancing over the ocean Captain Meredith descried, afar off, a large galley heading rapidly down upon a small vessel.

A long look at the two sails through his glass and he exclaimed, hurriedly:

"The yacht, as I live, and chased by a corsair!"

All was instantly excitement aboard ship, and with alacrity the seamen sprung to their posts in answer to the ringing orders of their young commander.

"Spread all the canvas that will draw, below and aloft, Mr. May, and have the men beat to quarters."

"Ay, ay, sir!" answered Howard May, his face aglow with the anticipation of battle.

On flew the fleet Bloodhound over the waters, and each moment brought her nearer to the chase; but yet miles divided them, and with dismay the young captain saw a puff

of smoke come from the bow-port of the galley, and watching, beheld the foremast of the yacht go over the side, having been cut away close to the deck.

Immediately the little vessel broached to, and a few moments more a boat was observed going aboard of her from the corsair galley.

"Mr. May, crowd her with canvas until her spars bend double! Forward there, at the long gun—are you yet in range?"

"No, sir not for a mile or two yet," answered the old gunner, who was most impatiently awaiting a chance to send his iron compliments after the corsair.

"By Jove, how she cuts through the waves, and how nobly she stands up under her crowd of canvas!" exclaimed Howard May, joining his commander upon the poop-deck.

"Yes, and by heaven she shall prove true to her name, and be a Bloodhound on yonder pirate's track," answered Noel Meredith, with determination.

"Are they not firing the yacht, sir?" suddenly asked a sweet voice, and the young captain started as he beheld by his side Leilah Sakel, who, in the excitement of the chase, he had momentarily forgotten.

"You are right, lady, the corsair has set fire to the yacht," he answered, after a close scrutiny through the glass; and a moment after bright flames burst from the devoted vessel, which soon became enveloped in sheets of fire and volumes of smoke.

"His work of destruction is complete now, and I suppose he will fly from me; but the Bloodhound is swift to avenge," said Captain Meredith, after a glance.

And that his surmise was correct was soon evident, for, after setting fire to the yacht, the galley spread all sail, and flew away in a direction which would bring her best sailing points into requisition.

As if in defiance of her American foe, she suddenly fired a gun astern, and ran up her colors, the corsair flag of Morocco, and the black flag with a golden eye.

"It is a vessel of my brother's squadron. I know her well now; it is the cruiser of El Dakotek, a man whom I

hate above all others in the world," said Leilah Sakel, with spirit.

" You do hate, then, lady? but could you *love*?" asked Noel Meredith, with considerable earnestness in his tone.

" As fiercely, as madly as I hate," returned the maiden, her eyes on fire, and with a look in them that fairly startled the American with their intensity.

" El Dakotek, you say," resumed the young commander, as if anxious to withdraw the match from the mine of passion he felt he had unearthed. " Yes, I have heard of him as a most bloodthirsty wretch."

" He is, and more than once has El Rais had to punish him for his cruelties. But see! your vessel, fleet as she is, gains not on the galley."

" No; she is on her best sailing point, and unless the breeze freshens and gives us more chance, she may yet escape us," returned Noel, with disappointment.

" Allah grant otherwise!" murmured the maiden, and for some moments she said no more.

In vain, however, was the fleet Bloodhound urged on with canvas, in the faint hope of overhauling her swift foe, for the galley, aided by sails and sweeps, held her own until darkness settled upon the ocean, and in the gloom the Americans lost sight of her, and with sad hearts were compelled to give up the chase.

CHAPTER XIV.

SWEEPING THE SEA.

WHEN the Captain of Captains had given Leilah Sakel permission to sail out of the harbor upon the deck of the English yacht, and return in her own boat, he had anticipated following in his galley in an hour, and, picking the maiden up, to carry her with him upon his cruise.

But, detained by numerous duties devolving upon him ere sailing, El Rais found that more than two hours had passed after the departure of the yacht, ere he gave orders to weigh

anchor, and then, before a stiff breeze, the fleet and beautiful galley sped seaward.

As she flew on, eagerly did the Rais scan the moonlit waters, in the hope of catching sight of the tiny sail of Leilah Sakel ; but as miles were flown over, and no trace of the boat could be seen, he believed he must have passed it, and instantly gave orders to put the vessel about.

Away the noble craft bounded, and ere long ran over her old anchorage ground ; but nowhere could any trace of the sail-boat be found, and with a fearful foreboding of evil, El Rais once more stood seaward, with every man aboard ship eagerly watching for the glimmer of the tiny sail.

But in vain their search, as the reader well knows, and daylight broke and discovered to the grief-stricken corsair that the frail craft had either sunk or been captured.

"Not sunk—that could not be, with this light sea and wind. No, some of those Algerines have taken her, and I swear, if one hair of Leilah Sakel's head comes to grief, I'll raise a howl of anguish that will sweeten my revenge. Ho, the top ! keep a bright look-out around, and report every bird you see ;" and the voice of the Rais rung in a manner peculiar to him when much moved.

Standing down the coast, but yet miles at sea, the Broom of the Seas swept on during the entire day, until, just at sunset, a cry from the foretop aroused all into action and brought the Rais instantly on deck.

"What is it ?"

"The ocean, on which thou art king, oh Rais, is dotted with three sails, sailing in the wake of the setting sun," answered the seaman.

" Crowd on sail ; get the sweeps out ; keep a bright watch and report every movement. Helmsman, head for those vessels !" were the terse orders issued by the Rais, and once more he returned to the cabin, to be recalled in a few moments by the information that the three strange sails had altered their course and were putting back toward the galley.

"To your guns, men ! Ship those sweeps, and let all be in readiness for action," ordered the Rais, in loud tones, and his crew, who knew him well, at once sprung to their posts and stripped the vessel into fighting trim.

It was evident ere a great while, that it was the intention of the three strangers to offer battle to the daring cruiser who so boldly had pursued them, and that they were of the same nationality was also apparent.

Swiftly the corsair vessel approached the others, and then, in the bright moonlight, El Rais recognized his foes as Algerines, and though one of his antagonists was fully his own size, and the two others were not much smaller, he determined to attack them, for in his heart he believed and hoped that Leilah Sakel was on board one of the cruisers, and he preferred rather to die in attempting her rescue than live without her bright smile and sunny presence to cheer his life upon the sea.

Silently the vessels approached until but half a mile divided them, and then, for the first time, it was evident, they had discovered that their antagonist was the Broom of the Seas, for instantly a great commotion was discernible aboard the three hostile craft.

"Fire!"

Like the cry of an avenging angel, the loud command of El Rais cut the air, and in answer the guns of the Broom of the Seas opened fiercely upon the nearest enemy, who became in a short while unmanageable, and was so crippled as to return but a weak fire.

"Let her go, now, and turn your attention to the nearest galley!" cried El Rais, and quickly, in obedience, the guns found a new target, and dealt upon it their severest blows.

Then waged the combat fiercely, for the largest galley, not yet having been brought under the fire of the corsair, moved boldly up, as if to board, and instantly the battle became terrible in its fury, and each moment sped away loaded with the lives of brave seamen, who fell fighting for their colors—be they black or white, they fought nobly for their flag.

Rendered furious by the loss of some of his best men, and anxious to prove to the Algerines that the Broom of the Seas did not fear to fight treble foes, El Rais cried to his men in trumpet tones to stand to their guns, and in answer came demoniacal yells of hate and defiance, as the well-trained and often-tried crew stood by their leader.

"Lay aboard, helmsmen! Steady! Now follow me,

ye hounds of Satan!" cried the Rais; and, as the two large galleys came together, he bounded, cimeter in hand, upon the enemy's deck, and quickly cleared around him a space for his men.

In vain did the Algerines resist; in vain did they die in defense of their ship; and at last, when all hope was gone, in vain did they cry for quarter; none was shown; all were cut down, and after a hard-fought battle, the victory rested upon the Broom of the Seas, who, in gory triumph, rode the waves—her scuppers literally running with human blood.

Through each ship, then, was search made for Leilah Sakel, but, when without success, El-Rais was almost beside himself with fury, for, brilliant as was his victory, little did it matter him if he had not accomplished the recapture of the beautiful maiden, whom he really had believed to be a captive on board of one of the Algerine cruisers.

After giving orders that prize crews should be placed aboard the Algerines, and having his own vessel put in ship-shape, the Captain of Captains moodily paced the deck, his step firm and quick, his brow dark and threatening.

"Poor little Leilah Sakel—what fate is thine? I wonder, and I'd give the world to know," he muttered, as he paced to and fro.

"I had believed your rescue certain when I captured those three Algerines. Those three capture's alone will gain me pardon in the sultan's eyes, and, indeed, it was a daring and brilliant thing, and had I not had so great a stimulant to make the attack, believing her on board, I would never have risked it.

"But, 'tis over now, and though I have suffered in men, the fruits of the struggle will more than repay me; and—but I must not whisper *that thought* yet.

"Ah, woe is me to have her gone—she who has ever been to me dearer even than an own sister, to have her gone from me ere the bright dream of my later years has met realization. Oh, Allah of the Moor and the God of the Christian, restore her to me, and I will bless thee!"

The rover hesitated in his walk, a look half of pity, half of superstition crossed his face, and then, as if smothering back deep emotions, he turned and glanced off over the

waters to where the three captive vessels were slowly sailing away in the direction of the stronghold.

But his heart was too full to banish thought, and again he resumed his walk, and muttering to himself :

" Yes, I am a Moor," he continued—" *a Moor* ; and yet I was not always thus, for the long long ago comes to me like a dream, and I picture other scenes than these—other associations.

" I remember an angel face—my mother's—whose loving heart ever shielded me from harm.

" I remember my father, and over that remembrance a cloud, a blood-stain passes. I recall one with whom I passed my boyhood years ; it was my brother, and yet I recall his face as though long, long years had not obliterated the sands of memory.

" Other shores than these—green hills, valleys, and a dear home—the home of my boyhood—flit like phantoms before my vision, and then comes o'er me a blank, then a din of warfare, a cloud, and the past is hidden ; the future is only before me.

" And that future from those bygone years ?

" The life of a corsair has been mine, and yet *he* led that life, and *he* was noble, although men called him a demon.

" Yes, El-Sebah, I will cherish thy memory ever fresh and green, for thou wert as a father to me, and in thy dying hour gave to my keeping little Leilah Sakel, thy daughter.

" Shall I, can I ever forget when thy brave spirit took its flight from thy vessel's deck, amid the din, the carnage of battle, and with the Moor's cry of triumph ringing in thy dying ears ?

" Never, no never can I forget that day, for then, from thy lieutenant, I became a corsair chief—ay, and one who has not disgraced his teaching, for well known over land and sea is the Rais el Rais.

" And she, whom thou didst love with all thy giant strength of soul and heart—she whose love for thee turned her heart against home, land and all, nobly did she prove her love when I told her that thy proud spirit had taken flight and soared aloft in the smoke of battle—for it broke her

heart ; the chords of life snapped in twain, and sped away in pursuit of thy spirit form, to dwell with thee beyond the sunny vale of heaven.

" And am I now all that is left of that home of four ?

" Is Leilah Sakel gone from me forevermore ?

" No, it cannot be, we *must*, we *shall* meet again this side the grave. I feel it here in my heart, even as I feel that Evangeline and I shall again have our paths in life cross, ay, cross to part no more until they sever on the brink of eternity.

" It must be—I *will* it so, and is not *my* will iron ?"

The corsair paused, his face lit up with a strange, wild light ; but, controlling all inward emotion, he gave a few orders to his officers, and descended into his cabin to seek repose.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SEA COMBAT.

THOUGH thrown off the trail by the darkness, the Blood-hound did not relinquish all hope of overhauling the galley of El Dakotek, and look-outs were kept constantly at the mast-head in search of a sail.

After hours of watching there came the cheerful and exciting cry of "sail ho," and officers and men felt their blood run quicker at the thought of contest.

" There are two of them, sir ; both large galleys, and, I think, pirates," answered the man at the mast-head, in answer to a question from Captain Meredith.

" Is either of them the galley we gave chase to yesterday ?"

" Ay, ay, sir—I see her plainly now as she wears around a little, and the other is equally as large."

" Good ! then they certainly have no cause to run away now, so we have a chance of a battle, which, if we are victorious, will clear the seas of two bloodthirsty monsters !" And the words of their young commander were received with cheers by the entire crew.

"Now, Howard, we will run down upon these fellows, and see if we can not bring them to terms—what is it you say, sir?" continued the captain, in answer to another hail from aloft.

"There is a third galley, sir; I had not noticed her."

"What is her size, and which way does she lay?"

"About the same as the others, captain, and all three of them keeping mighty close company."

"The more the merrier. Now, Mr. May, we will put the vessel in her best fighting-suit, and bear down and make the acquaintance of our piratical neighbors."

The Bloodhound immediately changed her course, and in an hour's time had come near enough to her antagonists to closely observe their every movement.

One of them, the largest, was the galley of El Dakotek, and her decks appeared crowded with men, while the other two were vessels of about the size, and also ready for action, should the daring American attempt an engagement when the odds were so great against him.

But not for a moment had Noel Meredith thought of aught else than fighting, were the enemy ever so numerous, for his Government had sent him thither to chastise the impudent corsairs of both Algiers and Morocco, and he was determined, even though he lost his vessel, to die bravely at his post, and hence he ordered the ship put in condition to battle unto the bitter end.

"Ha, lady, you here on deck? This is no place for you," said Noel, softly, as he suddenly caught sight of Leilah Sakel standing near.

"I am not afraid of death, and I have been in battle before, so do not fear for me," returned the maiden, in a grim tone.

"Hark ye, my men, do you note the courage of this mere child? Mind, then, to show her that American tars have no fear of death when fighting for their flag."

In response to the words of their commander the brave crew gave cheer after cheer, that were wafted across the waters, and reached the ears of the corsairs who, in response, fired a shot of defiance.

"Remain here, then, until the action commences, and then,

you must go below. Promise me," resumed Noel, turning once more to the brave girl at his side.

"I will do as you say," was the only reply, and then the duties of his ship called the captain away.

At length, just as the sun dipped into the ocean, the Bloodhound uttered her first yelp, a bark and a bite together, for the long gun forward sent a shot tearing through the decks of the nearest galley.

With interest the shot was returned by all three of the cruisers, and then, with delight, Noel Meredith discovered that his guns were the longest range.

"Keep steady at that, Howard, and we'll pepper them well ere we close," cried the youthful commander, and from that moment the broadsides of the Bloodhound opened with telling effect.

But, though punishing the enemy most severely, the fire of the galleys at length began to tell upon the American vessel-of-war, cutting her rigging in numerous places, and crashing through her decks, upon which numbers of her crew lay dead and dying.

But loud and cheering were the cries of Noel Meredith and Howard May to their men, who, encouraged by the brave example of their commanders, stood nobly at their guns, and sent missile after missile of death into the wooden bulwarks of their foes.

"Stand to it, men, and die like brave Americans!" cried Noel, suddenly, as a terrific broadside from the galley of El Dakotek swept his decks.

Seeing the close firing of the American guns was terribly demoralizing to his crew, El Dakotek determined to board and end all by a hand-to-hand encounter on the Bloodhound's decks; so signaling to his consorts to follow his example, he soon laid his galley alongside his daring antagonist.

"Boarders to beat back boarders!" called out Noel, in trumpet tones, and with the remnant of his crew he boldly threw himself forward, while he was ably seconded by Howard May.

Like an avalanche of devils, the corsairs threw themselves upon the American's decks and in overwhelming numbers they were hesitating for the rush upon the daring band, who,

refusing to cry for quarter, boldly confronted them, when suddenly, in the temporary lull of action, a deep, soul-stirring voice rose upon the air, and the next moment a manly form came over the sides of the Bloodhound, and with a bound placed himself between the contending foes.

It was the Rais el Rais, clad in his brilliant costume, armed to the teeth, with his jeweled cimeter in his right hand, and a cocked pistol in his left.

His face was pale as death, his eyes flashing fire, and his beardless lips tightly drawn across the set teeth.

For an instant he stood thus, looking like some avenging angel, beautiful, yet terrific in his anger, and there was a hush fell upon all.

"What means this outrage? Who has dared disobey the orders of the Rais el Rais?"

The voice was low, stern, but heard by all, and yet no answer came.

"Speak! El Dakotek, dog of a race of dogs, what means this? Selim, Aialek, what have you to say?"

El Dakotek uttered no word, but stood in sullen silence, while the other two galley commanders when addressed, answered:

"We but obeyed the orders of thy servant, El Dakotek, oh king of the seas."

"What! did he not tell thee my orders regarding this vessel of war?"

"He did not, oh skimmer of the deep seas."

"You are pardoned. Quick, get ye to your galleys and away!"

Without awaiting a second bidding the two officers, followed by their respective crews, gladly shrunk from the terrible eye of their chief, who once more addressed his recreant lieutenant.

"El Dakotek, to disobey me is to sign thy death-warrant. Kneel and take the penalty for thy crime."

The voice was calm, unmoved, but all present knew how terribly in earnest was the Rais, and none more so than the condemned man, who, with the stoicism of his race, stepped forward, bared his neck, and knelt before his chief.

A swift circling of the keen blade, a gashing sound, and

the head of El Dakotek rolled across the deck, while, with a thud, the body fell forward at the very feet of the Rais.

One glance around him, and the quick eyes took in with pleased surprise a number of familiar faces, for, when the firing had ceased, Lord Hargrove and his party, who had been El Dakotek's prisoners, had crossed from the galley to the Bloodhound's decks, and been witnesses of the strange and fearful punishment of their captor, while near them, waiting for his eye to rest upon her, was Leilah Sakel, and then with a glad cry of joy she sprung forward into the outstretched arms of the corsair, who, after one fond embrace, turned and greeted Evangeline and the others.

"But where are the others I would greet? Lieutenant May—has aught befallen him?" asked the Rais, as his eye again swept the circle.

"Poor May lies there, *dead*," and Noel Meredith stepped from the midst of his men, where he had been supporting the head of his dying lieutenant.

"*Dead?* and you are—" But he could say no more, for the eyes of the Captain of Captains and Noel Meredith met, and long and earnest was the gaze, as if they both would recall the buried past, as though each tried to read the other's thoughts, to lay bare his inmost soul.

A moment they stood thus, the center of all eyes, and then the Rais repeated, slowly and in a dreamy manner:

"*And you are—*"

"Noel Meredith," answered the American, in a slow tone.

"Noel! yes, Noel was his name—and I recall it now; *her* name was *Mary*, and *his* name was *Rupert*—yes—"

"*Alvah, my brother! my brother!*" and with a bound, Noel Meredith sprung forward and threw his arms around the neck of the corsair chief, who held him back for one instant, and then with a low sob, said:

"Yes, Noel, I am your brother, Alvah."

For some moments no word was spoken; a hushed silence fell upon all upon that bloodstained deck, and even the wounded forgot to moan in agony; but then the corsair chief drew himself up and said, softly:

"Brother, I have just awakened from a long and troubled

dream. My heart, my brain, is free once more, and I remember all.

"But come ; yonder lies my galley, unstained by blood ; let us go thither with our friends, while these scenes of carnage are removed from view. Come, Noel—come Leilah Sakel—come."

As if still partially dazed with what had transpired, the Rais led the way to his cutter that lay alongside the sloop-of-war, and thither he was accompanied by Lord Hargrove and his party, who were all made comfortable in the spacious and luxurious cabin of the Broom of the Seas.

CHAPTER XVI.

CAUGHT IN A TRAP.

HAVING given his orders to the cruiser of El Dakotek to head for the harbor at the stronghold, and signaled the Blood-hound to rendezvous at the same point, the Captain of Captains spread his fleet craft with canvas, and sped away up the coast.

But with darkness came on a storm, and the white wings of the Broom of the Seas had to be reefed, and all put in readiness to meet the shock of the tempest, which, through the long hours of the night, continued with unabated fury, causing the noble vessel to pitch and strain fearfully in the caldron of mad waters, and yet, with her brave young commander at the helm, she kept her course, in spite of the wild raging of the sea and keen blasts of the wind, and successfully weathered the gale, to descry, at daylight, another enemy—an enemy as relentless and cruel as the sea—the swift cruisers of the sultan of Morocco, sent forth in search of his rebellious subject, the Rais el Rais, who had defied his authority, and driven from his stronghold, by force of arms, his messenger, the Kaid of the Gates.

Afar-off, north-westward, could be traced the long, dark line of forbidding coast, and drifting helplessly upon it, dis-

mantled and a perfect wreck, was the disloyal cruiser of El Dakotek, going on to destruction.

With pitying eyes all on board watched the dark wreck, powerless to lend a helping hand to her poor crew, and as they watched, saw her plunge and roll on, nearer and nearer to the fatal coast, until, with a mighty bound into the air, as if to spring over the sunken reefs, she fell, with a crash and tremendous force, down upon the treacherous rocks, and the next instant was dashed into a mass of floating timbers, while her struggling seamen found a watery grave, or were thrown mangled and dead upon the desolate beach.

"Thus perishes one of my fleetest cruisers. Severely, indeed, has the treachery of her commander been punished; now I must direct my attention to yonder fleet," said the Rais, as he turned his gaze from the scene of the wreck toward the coming vessels of the cruisers, which, five in number, were coming down toward the corsair, and but about five miles distant.

"What is your intention regarding them?" asked Lord Hargrove, who, with Mr. Seymour, stood upon the deck by the side of the Rais, while leaning upon the arm of her father was Evangeline.

Without answering, the Rais cast a long, searching glance around the horizon, and then said :

"Nowhere can I see my brother's vessel. Allah held him safely in his hand, I pray, during the storm."

"Yes, and your brother is a most able officer, while the Bloodhound is a good craft and most seaworthy," said Mr. Seymour.

"Yet she was crippled a little in the fight, and is somewhat short of men," returned the Rais, as if dreading evil.

"But what is your intention regarding yonder vessels?" again asked Lord Hargrove, anxiously.

Another searching glance around the horizon, and then the Rais replied, slowly :

"Were the Bloodhound in sight, I would run down to her, place you all safely aboard of her, and then fight it out with those vessels which have thus dared me on my own ship."

The Rais spoke firmly, and with a certain ring in his voice that betokened the deepest anger against his captains, convinc-

ing his hearers that, single-handed as he was, he dared attack the five cruisers with the Broom of the Seas.

"But you are no longer a Moor, captain ; you are now a Christian, and intend to return with your brother to America, so would it not be better to show your heels to yonder fleet, go in search of the Bloodhound, and finding her, shape your course for England, whither Captain Noel Meredith can soon follow you—that is, as soon as his Government will relieve him from duty on this station ?"

"You draw a fine picture, Lord Hargrove, and one I was anxious to become an actor in, but first I desired to visit my stronghold, for various reasons, and then do as you suggest ; but now, you will observe that those vessels have approached me in such a way, accident favoring them, that I am compelled to fight them ; but, on account of my lady guests, I will make it a running battle—that is, I will run the gantlet of the fleet and gain the open sea."

"I thank you for this kindness, Captain Meredith, and on account of these ladies, your beautiful sister, my own daughter and Mrs. Thornton, whose fate would be terrible if evil befell this ship, I beg of you, as soon as possible extricate yourself from your present dangerous situation."

In answer to the earnest words of Lord Hargrove, the stern voice of the Rais el Rais rung out, in trumpet tones, his orders to prepare for battle and flight, and immediately the scene aboard the corsair was soul stirring and most exciting, for the hardy and wild-looking crew of swarthy Moors rushed to their posts as if anxious to join in a scene of carnage and misery.

The galley-slaves sprung to their places at the sweeps, and held them in readiness ; three bold and experienced helmsmen went to the wheel, the sailing-master and his immediate crew spread sail upon the vessel, while along the low, dark bulwarks, around each gun, were grouped the gunners, stripped to the waists, and awaiting in silence an order to become participants in the exciting scene.

Forward of the poop-deck were assembled, stern and silent, some three dozen powerfully-built, agile men, almost giants in size, and comprising natives of almost every land from under the sun, from the thick-lipped, low-browed African, the light-haired, light-eyed Russian, and pig tailed Chinaman, to the

Arab of the Desert, the Englishman and the half-breed of the South American Indian.

This motley group—this commingling of the giants from the nationalities of the world, the Rais held under his own eye and hand, and had selected and trained them for years.

They were his boarders, and few had ever withstood their bold rush upon the bloody deck, when their leader had bade them follow him.

With a kind of secret horror, a dread, as if standing in the presence of wild animals, Lord Hargrove and his friends gazed upon the strange crew, and then turned their eyes upon the still more strange commander.

He had just returned from the cabin, and was rigged from head to foot in battle trim, presenting the appearance of a warrior in the days of chivalry, for upon his head, half-hiding the clusters of dark hair, was a helmet of pure gold, while massive bars of the same metal protected his shoulders from a blow from a cimeter, but otherwise the broad breast and manly form were unprotected.

In his belt were several handsomely-mounted pistols and a gem-studded dagger, and a small but keen-shaped battle-ax, while suspended by a chain of rare workmanship, was a glittering cimeter, loose in its scabbard and ready for use. It was the same deadly weapon which the English party had already seen used with such fearful result.

Following the Rais came Leilah Sakel, still smiling and beautiful, as if totally unconscious of danger, or, if knowing it, felt perfect confidence in the ability of the corsair to ward it off and defeat his enemies.

"Ladies," and as the Rais spoke, his eyes rested upon Evangeline alone, "the deck of a corsair in action is certainly no place for you, so, when the first gun is fired, Leilah Sakel will lead you to a place of safety below."

"I would prefer to stay," began Evangeline, while her face flushed.

"But you can not; you *must* not; so go with Leilah Sakel when the first gun is fired. Gentlemen, I would also prefer that you should accompany the ladies, but should you desire to remain, and even participate, you have my permission," and the Rais bowed to Lord Hargrove and Mr. Seymour.

No true Englishman ever resisted a temptation to witness a fight, whether between gamecocks, dogs, pugilists, or on the field of battle, and of course our two acquaintances instantly demanded weapons of offense and defense, and in a few moments were armed to the teeth, and standing beside the Rais.

One glance again around the horizon, and the Captain of Captains muttered, while his brow clouded with disappointment :

"Too late—too late! Yonder rise the tapering spars of the Bloodhound, miles and miles away; but now we will have to fight. Leilah Sakel, below at once with your friends. Forward there—bend your gun across the bows of the nearest galley, and let her commander know that the Rais el Rais demands an explanation of his actions in thus running down upon his admiral in warlike attitude," and as he spoke, the voice of the corsair thrilled all by its power and sternness.

A yell of commingled eagerness, delight and fury, a burst of fire from the port bow of the Broom of the Seas, a deafening report, and the battle of the corsairs had begun—a combat was opened that would rouge the white caps of the restless waves with the blood of many brave men, and sink beneath the sea hundreds of the daring pirates of Morocco.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BATTLE OF THE CORSAIRS.

WHEN Noel Meredith returned to the Bloodhound, after his visit to the galley of his new-found brother, he immediately set about clearing his vessel, and putting her once again in order, after the damages sustained by her hard and well-fought battle.

Having come to a decision with the Rais regarding the rendezvous for which he should steer, he quickly obeyed the signal from the Broom of the Seas to get under way, and was now in company with the galleys sailing merrily over the waters.

But then, after the excitement of clearing ship, and setting sail was over, came upon him a feeling of sadness for the loss of poor Howard May, who was then sleeping far down beneath the blue billows above which he had sailed in triumph thousands of long miles.

Poor Howard! his sword hung in the cabin untouched forever by the hand that wielded it so bravely; the stateroom was closed forever to the presence of its former occupant, and at the cabin table was the vacant chair, reminding the young captain ever sadly of his friend, whom he had dearly loved, for years had passed since first they became shipmates.

Bowing his head upon his hands, and resting them upon the table in the cabin, Noel Meredith sat at his untouched meal, and pondered long and painfully upon the memory of his friend, gone from his presence forevermore; and then, as he glanced around him, he missed another form, a sunshiny presence that had for the past few days gladdened his seahome with her light young life—the beautiful Leilah Sakel, who, like a waif from the waves, had come to him to nestle in his heart, and cause him to feel that no other woman in all the wide world could replace her image.

"A terrible storm is rising, sir."

The interruption caused Noel to glance up, and he saw before him, not the handsome face of his friend, Howard, but he who had taken his place.

"All right, Waters; I will immediately come upon deck," answered the captain, and shaking off the sad feelings that were upon him, he soon stood upon the deck, glancing out over the wild waste of waters, rapidly darkening beneath the approach of the storm and the night.

Afar off to leeward was the Broom of the Seas, still pressing on under heavy canvas, while, miles to windward, already breasting the shock of the storm, was the cruiser of El Dakotek.

"Trim all close, Mr. Waters, for we will have a hard struggle, I fear," exclaimed the young officer, and immediately he entered earnestly into the care of his vessel, which met the storm with a bold front, and bravely weathered it through the long hours of the night.

With the break of day the galley of El Dakotek could be seen far ahead, a helpless wreck, and washing rapidly shoreward, but nowhere was visible the cruiser of Rais el Rais, for the galley lay in a position about half way between the vessels of the two brothers, and though she could be discerned from the decks of each, too great a distance divided them for them to see one another.

From the decks of the Bloodhound, as from the Broom of the Seas, the unfortunate galley was seen to go ashore and become a total wreck, and unable to be of any assistance, Noel Meredith still continued on his course.

"Sail ho!"

From the mast-head of the sloop-of-war, came the cry, and ere Captain Meredith could ask a question, the cry was repeated thrice again.

"Where away, my man?"

"There are three sail in sight, each heading for a certain point on the coast."

"Can you make them out?"

"Ay, ay, sir; and there are two more of them, all Moorish galleys."

"A nest of pirates, as I live. Well, I must keep a bright look-out," muttered Noel, and then, raising his voice, he hailed again.

"Are they large galleys, and how do they head?"

"They are corsairs, and all heading around the same point —ha! there is another sail closer in shore, and it looks like the Broom of the Seas."

This last assertion created a decided commotion upon the sloop-of-war, and caused her commander to take his glass and ascend to the mast-head.

For some time he remained there, busily watching the distant vessels, and then descending to the deck gave orders to have the drum beat to quarters, and more sail to be spread on the Bloodhound.

Swiftly over the rough waters dashed the American vessel, her men at their guns, her officers at their posts, and Noel Meredith quickly pacing the deck with stern brow and lip.

Suddenly the boom of a gun broke upon the ear, and ini-

mediately after from the several galleys comes a flash, and a hurtling iron hail rushes on toward the Broom of the Seas.

"As I thought ; that cursed sultan has sent those vessels out to capture the Broom of the Seas. Well, my corsair galleys, the Bloodhound shall again give cry on the track of the pirates," and, turning to Mr. Waters, Noel Meredith gave his orders rapidly and sternly.

On swept the majestic vessel, ready for action, and from her decks her eager crew watched the single-handed combat of the daring Broom of the Seas against her five adversaries, and as they saw gun after gun poured upon the fleet with telling effect, many a hearty American cheer went up.

"Great God ! behold !" and as Noel Meredith spoke, a sheet a volcano of livid flame burst up from the deck of one of the galleys, a splitting asunder, a tearing into fragments, and the unfortunate vessel was blown into atoms, with a sound that shook the very waters, a concussion that was felt upon every deck.

Then, as if rejoicing in her work of destruction, the Broom of the Seas drew near to the remaining enemies, her sides became a line of livid fire, her guns roared with angry vehemence, and, like an avenging angel, she flung herself into the contest, dealing death ten-fold around her.

Perfect yells of triumph at her success, at the superb manner in which she was handled, and at her daring, arose from the Americans, who, in their excitement to witness the scene, sprung into the rigging and upon the guns and bulwarks ; but, though boldly beating off her foes, the Broom of the Seas was mortal, and the terrible fire poured upon her told fearfully against men and rigging ; yet her commander still fought on, disabling another galley, and sinking a third, until the two largest foes alone remained to give him battle.

As if determined to make their former admiral strike his flag to them, the two galleys bore down upon the Rais el Rais, the one to be in a short while seriously injured, but the other, more fortunate, to get alongside of the famous rover, and grapple with him.

Though having suffered severely in rigging, the crew of the last galley of the fleet to give battle, had been little hurt,

and, led on by their commander, they hurled themselves pell-mell upon the decks of the Broom of the Seas, where stood the Captain of Captains, bold, defiant, and daring them on, although around him rallied but a few of his brave crew, all that were left to obey their dearly-loved chief.

Upon either side of the chief stood Lord Hargrove and Mr. Seymour, who, through all, had fought with determined courage.

"Come on, traitors!" cried the Rais, in commanding tones, and, pouring in a fire, the Moors from the galley rushed on.

Then, above the sound of the storm, came a loud, stern voice, in pure English, crying :

"Lay her alongside, helmsman! Steady! By heaven, nobly done! Now follow me, ye Bloodhounds, to your feast!"

With a yell that reverberated through the air, the seamen of the Bloodhound sprung upon the decks of the Broom of the Seas, led on by Noel Meredith, and like an avalanche hurled themselves upon the Moors, who were cut down without mercy, and in fright turned and fled back to their galley, which was rapidly cut loose, and stood away, leaving the brave vessel of the Captain of Captains uncaptured, through the timely aid of his twin brother.

But he who had fought so well and nobly, where was he?

Upon the deck, bleeding from a wound in his temple, lay the great chief, having fallen, as if dead, at the volley poured upon him by his enemies, ere they made their final charge.

By his side knelt Lord Hargrove and Mr. Seymour, while around him were gathered his daring crew, sad at the fall of their chief.

"My brother—what! is he dead?" and he staggered forward, when suddenly another form came upon the scene—that of Evangeline, who, with pale, frightened face threw herself beside the prostrate chief, and drew the gore-stained head upon her bosom.

"Dead? Oh, he is not dead—he will not die—no, no, he must live, and live for me!"

A surprised murmur ran around the circle, but, unheeded.

ing all, she drew the chief still closer to her heart, as she saw Leilah Sakel approach.

Quickly, and unheeding the motion of Evangeline, Leilah Sakel knelt beside the form of the Rais. Her hand pressed his heart, and then sought his pulse.

"Allah! I bless thee; he is only stunned," she said.

Springing forward, Noel Meredith examined the wound, and quickly verified her words, while Evangeline, in joyfulness, burst into a torrent of weeping.

As Leilah Sakel had said, the wound was wholly on the surface, stunning the chief for a short while, and leaving but a slight gash, which he did not notice, as, recovering consciousness, he staggered to his feet, and with glad surprise noticed who it was that had supported his head, while Evangeline, in confusion, stole back to the cabin, followed by Leilah Sakel and Mrs. Thornton, leaving the deck to the brave men who had so gallantly fought there.

After the combat, the still floating galley of the sultan rapidly spread sail, and stood slowly away from the scene, leaving the Broom of the Seas and her gallant preserver, the Bloodhound, lying side by side, and repairing damages: after which they once more set sail, in company, for the corsair stronghold, and that night, while skimming along over the waters, Evangeline lay awake in her comfortable berth, listening to the voice of the corsair chief, who, having had his wound dressed, thought no more of it, as he paced the deck, and sung, in a grave tenor, a verse or two from the "Pirate's Serenade," not knowing how each word he uttered gladdened the heart of the English maiden, who, while drinking in the words:

"Forgive my rough mood, unaccustomed to sue,
I woo not, perhaps, as your land-lovers do,
My voice has been tuned to the notes of the gun,
Which startle the deep when the combat's begun,"

sunk peacefully to sleep to dream of her corsair lover.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LORD HARGROVE'S MISSION.

IN the cabin of the fleet cruiser were assembled, besides her commander, Noel Meredith, and Leilah Sakel, the English party, and with deep interest had all listened to the history of the brothers' lives, each telling his own story. In each life there had been much of bitterness, of romance, and adventure; but especially did the strange career of Alvah Meredith—he who had won the name of Captain of Captains, strike all present, while in their hearts was a warm place given to the beautiful Leilah Sakel, whose life had certainly been a happy one, for dearly had she been loved by both of her parents and the brother of her adoption.

When Alvah had ceased speaking, Lord Hargrove said :

" You spoke of El-Sebah being the father of Leilah Sakel, and also, I believe, stated he was an Englishman ? "

" Yes, my lord, the father of Leilah Sakel was partly English—that is, his father was an Englishman and his mother a Moor."

" Was he an officer in the navy ? " asked Lord Hargrove with considerable excitement.

" He was, and his story, as I heard it from my adopted mother, was that he had been wrecked on the coast of Morocco, had fled with and married the wife of a Berber sheik, whose slave he was, and returning to England had been reinstated in his titles and estates, and going to America with his vessel, he had fallen in battle there, and left a widow with an only child. His wife had once more returned to Morocco : that child was El-Sebah, and I was made by him his successor on sea and land."

- Mr. Meredith, I thank you, for your story has unraveled a thread that took me to Morocco, with my distinguished legal friend here, Mr. Seymour.

" I had always believed that an heir lived to the estates of my revered uncle, and you have found that heir, or heiress

—for Leilah Sakel is the person. Come, my daughter, you are not alone in the world, for you have found an uncle who will be as a father to you, and Evangeline will be a sister to you."

With joy the English beauty welcomed her Moorish cousin, and through the strange coincidences and revelations that had come all were most delighted.

But then, one thing troubled Noel Meredith—his brother was a corsair chief, and he feared that perhaps he would still remain such; but, as if divining his thoughts, the Rais said:

"Noel, do not think that I will longer remain in the service of the Sultan of Morocco. I am no Moor, and gladly do I leave the land for the home of my nativity.

"Yes, I will at once seek the stronghold, and, after yielding my command to noble old Casbin, I will set sail in my fleet galley for the shores of America, where, with the wealth I possess, we can all live in luxury together."

"And I, brother, am tired of the sea, and will give it up. I had believed you dead, but have found you, and it behoves us never more to part."

"Amen!"

Alvah Meredith, the Captain of Captains, kept his word and gave his command to Casbin, after which he set sail in the Broom of the Seas for London, and there, in St. Paul's Church, were bound together in the holy tie of marriage, the former famous rover and Evangeline Hargrove, for with all the warmth of their passionate natures did they love each other.

Soon after, through the exertions and influence of Mr. Seymour (who, by the way, married Mrs. Thornton shortly after their return to London), Leilah Sakel gained possession of the estates of which she was justly the heir, and then there was another wedding, for between the corsair's daughter and Noel Meredith it was the same old story of

"Two souls with but a single thought,
Two hearts that beat as one."

In one of the Middle States that border the broad Atlantic, the two brothers and their lovely wives settled down in lordly homes, happy in each other's love, and content to live in peace.

and quietude the latter days of their lives, for stormy and ~~bri~~
ter indeed were their earlier years.

There, in these stately homes, were wont to come each year, from old Englaud, Lord Hargrove, with Mr. and Mrs. Seymour, who rejoiced in the happiness of those they loved so well.

But now, by the Atlantic's shores, with a plain white marble shaft soaring many feet above his lonely head, slept in death's last sleep, Alvah Meredith, whose earlier years, ~~in~~ ~~the~~ crime and bloodshed on the deck of a Moorish corsair, ~~won~~ ~~for~~ him the title of the Captain of Captains.

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